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NO.52 MAY 1988

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ZX SPECTRUM



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The sensation from 1986 that spent 3 weeks at No. 1!

ESCAPE FROM SINGE'S CASTLE
All in all I'd strongly recommend this – it's playable and extremely compelling. Don't miss it. ZZAP 64

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Game of the Year 1987. More than a year in the U.K. Chart! (Source: GALLUP)

THE LIVING DAYLIGHTS
The officially licensed version of the hit James Bond movie.

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*I love Ghosts 'n' Goblins, it's brilliant. I've played it and played it and completed it and completed it, and I **still** play it. Ghosts 'n' Goblins is a brilliant translation of the arcade game, and well worth a tenner.* ZZAP 64 *This game is compelling beyond belief.* CRASH

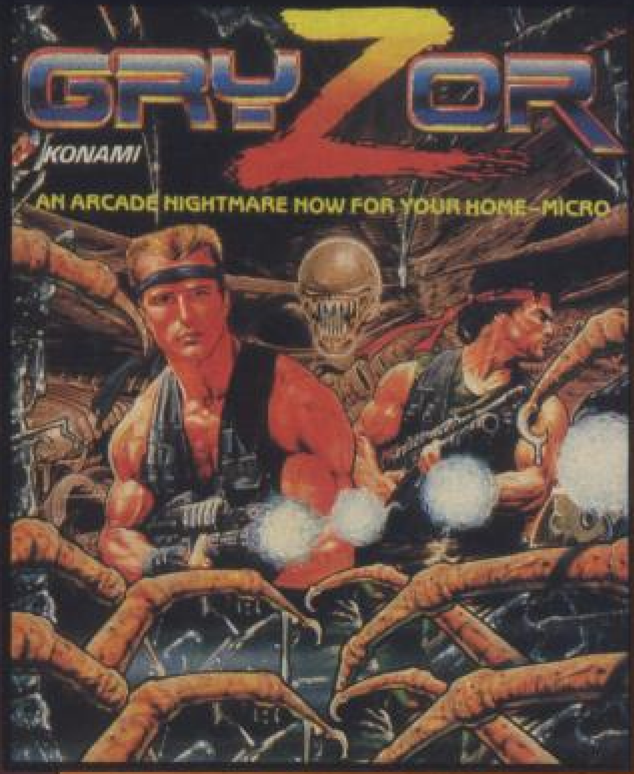


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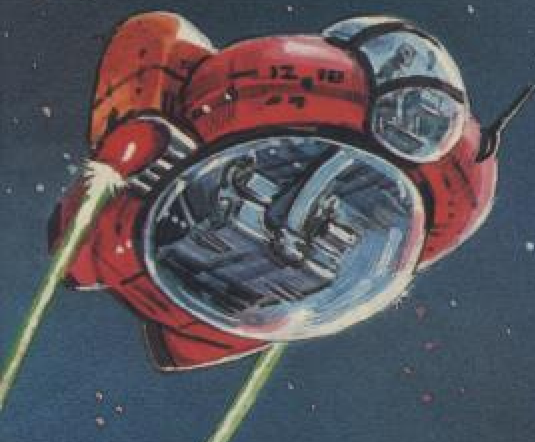
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CRASH

ZX SPECTRUM

ISSUE 52 MAY 1988

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COMPETITION RULES
The Editor's decision is final in all matters relating to adjudication and while we offer prizes in good faith, believing them to be available, if something untoward happens (like a game that has been offered as a prize being scrapped) we reserve the right to substitute prizes of comparable value. We'll do our very best to despatch prizes as soon as possible after the published closing date. Winners names will appear in a later issue of CRASH. No correspondence can be entered into regarding the competitions (unless we've written to you stating that you have won a prize and it doesn't turn up, in which case drop Frances Mable a line at the PO Box 10 address). No person who has any relationship, no matter how remote, to anyone who works for either Newsfield or any of the companies offering prizes, may enter one of our competitions.

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'What we have here ladies and gentlemen is the very latest issue of CRASH.'

'That's great! When can we have it?'

'I'm sorry to tell you sir, but, you'll have to wait till May 26 for the next delivery.'

'Aaarghh!'

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SEASONAL DROUGHT

Following a trend as regular as the tides, the flow of software has slowed to its customary summer trickle. However, it would appear to be a case of quality not quantity, since CRASH's pages boast some four Smashes, and one or two extremely good games that didn't quite make our top accolade.

To make up for the deficit of new products, Nick Roberts's Playing Tips Special should breathe some new life into the ageing games lying around many a Spectrum owner's bedroom – hope you enjoy it.

Next month sees a FREE 16-page full-colour arcade special, which details some of the better coin-ops to look out for during the long summer holidays, and a number of hints and tips to make your 20p go further! The supplement is a totally separate booklet slipped in between the pages of CRASH; make sure your copy is intact before leaving the shop!

I'm afraid it's apology corner, folks. Last month a couple of bloopers were made. First off, Ms Irving stated that PSS were pulling out of the Spectrum strategy market. This is in fact not true, as pointed out to me by their Commercial Director, Richard Cockayne, who went on to say that rather than simply ceasing production of Spectrum strategy games, PSS are now finding that the Spectrum cannot handle the style of games that they wish to produce. To this end, PSS are altering the direction of their product line toward the 16-bit machines. With the amount of Spectrums around though, strategy fans should still be seeing PSS games on the shelves, but merely less frequently.

Secondly, the CRASH readers' awards handed over the Worst Game award to *Eastenders*. Unfortunately we credited Tynesoft with this masterpiece of programming, when in fact it should have been Macsen. Apologies to all involved.

Oh, by the way. Watch out for another cover mount cassette in two month's time – you have been warned . . .

Steve Jarratt

STEVE JARRATT

IN THE NEXT CRASH

■ **FREE ARCADE SUPPLEMENT** – 16 pages crammed full of arcade action: hints, tips, which machines to avoid and which ones to fill up with your hard-earned cash!

■ **PEN PALS SPECIAL** – make friends with Spectrum users worldwide!

■ **MICROPROSE REVEALED** – CRASH takes a look at the masters of simulation

■ **DIARY OF A GAME** – Raffaele Cecco reveals the day to day problems of creating an original Spectrum game

■ **ON THE SCREEN** – Mark Caswell was too ill to do it this month, but hopefully he should be back with your works of digital art next month

■ **PLUS PAGES AND PAGES OF TIPS AND REVIEWS**

It's all in CRASH Issue 53, on sale Thursday May 26

REVIEWS

MAYhem

SMASHED!

HOT SHOTS 75% and over . . .

FULL INDEX

ADVERTISERS INDEX

N·E·W·S

FIVE GO TO MANDARIN SOFTWARE



LEVEL 9, The Powerhouse and **Bubble Bus** are already operating under the **Mandarin** umbrella. This month they're joined by the French software house **Jawx International** and **Red Rat** of Manchester. As yet their debut titles are confined to the 16-bit market but who knows what the future may hold? Meanwhile, **Level 9**'s compilation *Time and Magik* (*Lords of Time*, *Price of Magik* and *Red Moon*) is to be followed this summer by a new adventure game, codenamed *Lancelot*, which is to be set in Arthurian Britain. Whether it's going to be available for the Spectrum isn't certain as yet – we'll just have to wait and see.



BREWSTER'S BALLOON

LAST CHRISTMAS CRASH waved goodbye to Derek Brewster as he left for Newcastle to help set up a new budget software company, **Zeppelin Games**. Its first releases for the Spectrum, *Frontline* and *Sabotage*, easily distinguished by their red-striped covers, should be out now and the conversion of the excellent C64 game *Zybex* (ZZAP! Silver Medal, 92%) is likely to be available some time in May. All three games retail at £2.99.

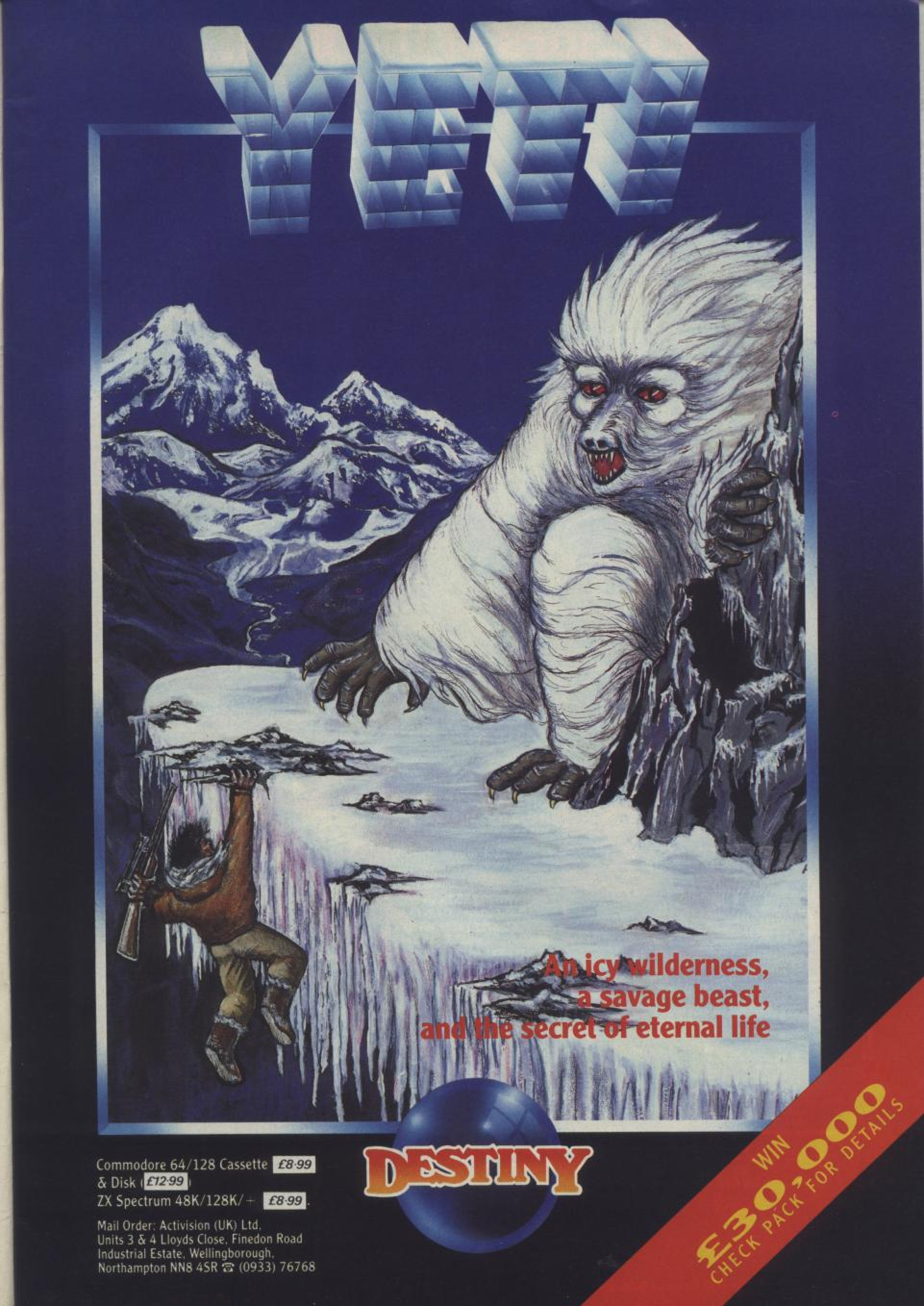
A new range of games, old classics re-released and programs developed outside Zeppelin's in-house team, to be identified by a distinctive blue-striped cover, is about to be launched. The label kicks off, very fittingly, with two Derek Brewster classics, *Codename Mat* (93%, Issue 4) and *Jasper* (91%, Issue 10) both priced at £1.99.

MICRONET MAGIC

SINCE April 14 Micronet, the five-year-old, on-line microcomputing service, has been operating in its relaunched form. The new look includes an enhanced daily news service which covers the home and small business computing market, longer availability of back issues and an on-line magazine for each computer which is to be published once a week on specific days. You can log on every Friday for a brand new issue of the Spectrum magazine.

POETRY IN MOTION

AT A RECENT Microprose promotional function at Staverton Airport in Gloucestershire, two members of the CRASH team received more than they bargained for . . . the dynamic duo, Dominic and Paul, were spotted spinning around in a Gazelle helicopter along with other famous computer hacks. A stomach-churning, gut-wrenching, heart-stopping time was endured by all . . .


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HERCULES –
SLAYER OF THE DAMNED

Son of the Gods, curse of his fellow men, Hercules is set 12 awesome tasks to exonerate the sin of murdering his children. Armed by his divine fathers he sets forth to face the hideous skeleton hordes and ultimately overcome the evil minotaur. To slay the damned is his only saviour in repenting his sins.

BLOOD BROTHERS

"Our blood is mixed,
We are as one,
Let no man or beast come between us,
And let nothing deter us from our aim,
To avenge the deaths of our parents,
And destroy the Scorpians,
DEATH TO THE SCORPIANS"





GREMLIN

Gremlin Graphics Software Ltd., Alpha House, 10 Carver Street, Sheffield S1 4FS. Tel: 0742 753423

GEEBEE AIR RALLY

Producer: **Activision**
Retail price: **£7.99**
Author: **Steve Cartwright**

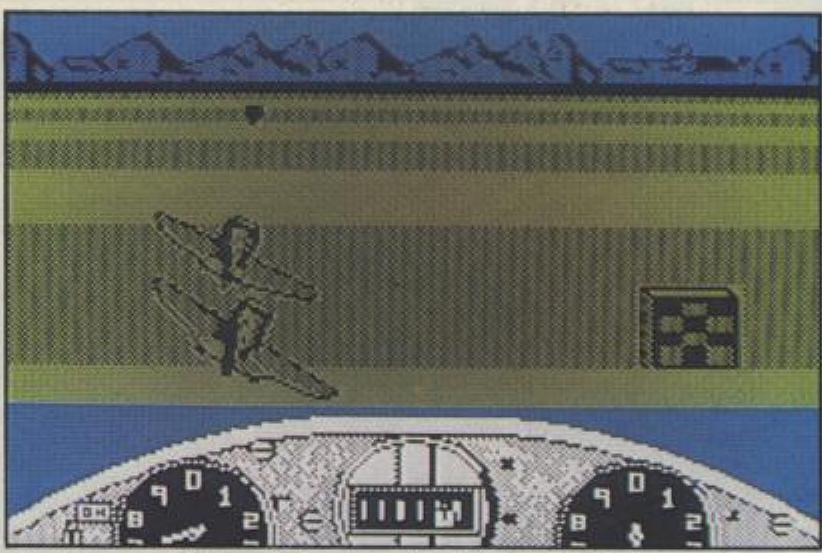
It's the mid 1930s and all those magnificent men in their flying machines are flocking to Buckeye, Ohio to compete in the Cartwright Cup Classic. Donning flying jacket and goggles, the player steps into his GeeBee 250mph speed plane and the race begins.

The aircraft is viewed in 3-D from behind, while a cockpit panel below the main screen displays altimeter, compass and speedometer. To win the coveted silver cup, contestants must race against the clock to complete four courses over eight multiloaded levels. A series of pylons mark out the correct flight path across a barren plain, and success involves flying between the markers in the shortest possible time. If the plane strays off course, a warning message flashes up and the clock ticks away at four times the normal rate.

The pilot has two chances to complete each race, and bonus points are awarded in proportion to the amount of time left on the clock. Success on the first attempt means that the extra time is added to that allotted to the next course.

Controls allow the pilot to fly over, dive under or manoeuvre around other racers. Wide and sharp turns can be negotiated by climbing, to speed up, and diving, for extra control as the aircraft slows down. Collisions do not immediately cause the plane to crash although once maximum damage has been sustained, the pilot automatically bails out and parachutes away. The screen then flicks to a still shot of his generally undignified landing.

The fourth course in each level is a bonus event, testing special skills such as slalom control or low flying balloon-popping. Status displays show time counting down and current score as the pilot attempts to steer one of the most dangerous aircraft ever built to success.



PAUL

" The concept is great – flying through the air, the wind whistling past your ears. Sadly, GeeBee Air Rally comes nowhere near emulating the great flying days of the 30s. The game is just so shallow. There's very little variation in the courses which just appear to be repeated over and over again, and the graphics are plain. The collision detection when banking is a bit dodgy, resulting in a wobble even when you don't touch any of the opponents. And to finish it off the multiload is a real pain – there's so little difference between the stages it's a wonder they needed it, anyway. "

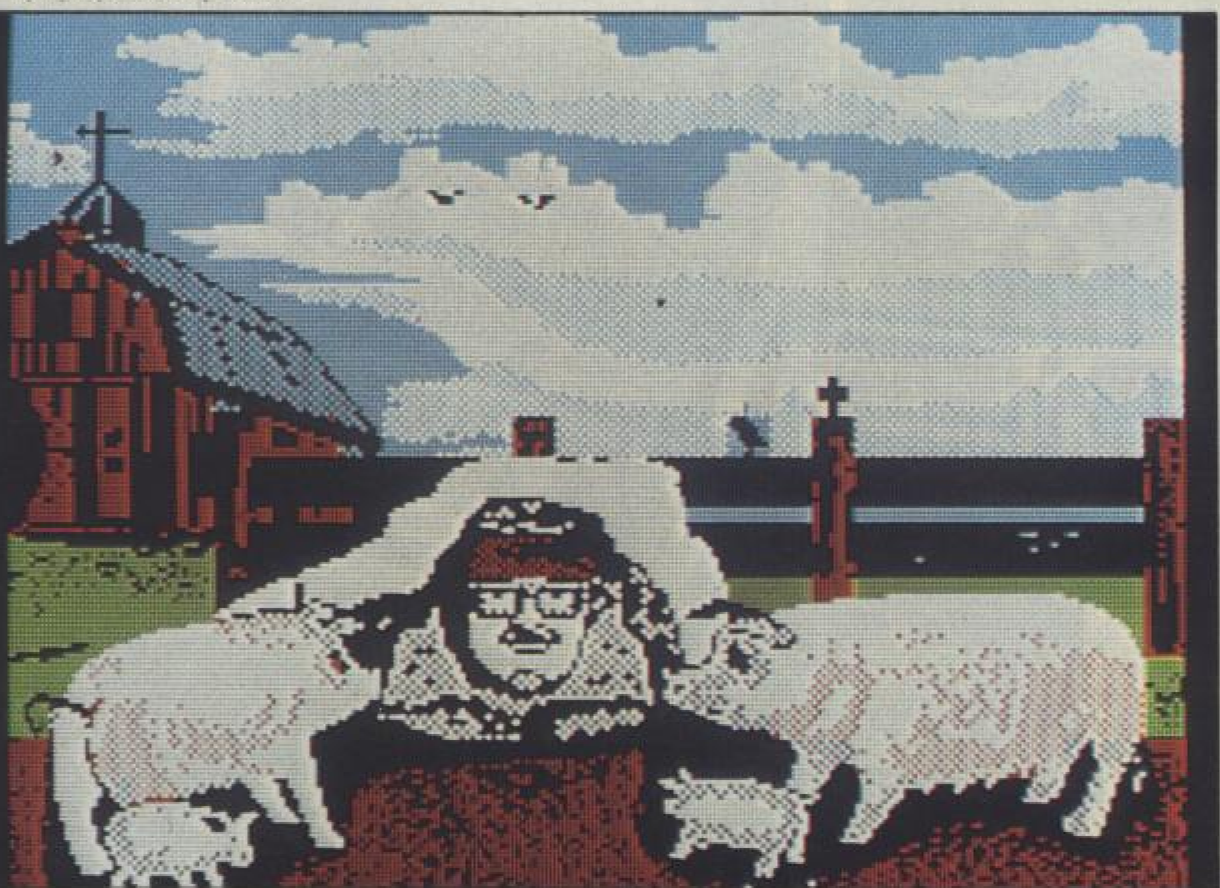
KATI

" GeeBee Air Rally has all the basic elements of a successful racing game. Soaring through the sky, diving and ducking opponents, dodging pylons and popping balloons is suitably exhilarating. It's just a pity that the essential core of the game isn't better supported by a framework of graded difficulty. The various courses are almost identical and don't present a particularly tough challenge; a little manoeuvering and most opponents are easily avoided. Graphically, the game is disappointing: the detailed still pictures of the results of bailing out are accompanied only by the montonously striped and otherwise bare landscapes. Similarly, all you get when an aircraft hurtles to the earth, is an anticlimactic belly-flop. Still, for the pleasure of a slick and easily masterable flying sequence, it might be worth a look. "

NICK

" Racing a plane at high speeds, just missing chequered boards, popping balloons and crashing into the tails of the opposition seems a very peculiar practice to me. But it's great fun too! GeeBee Air Rally seems difficult and unaddictive at first but if you bear with it and get onto the higher levels it gets better as you progress. The planes are all excellently drawn and they dive and soar around the courses very effectively. Taking off is the only problem I had; it seems that you always have to make two attempts at it, consequently losing valuable time to complete the course. Each level is pretty sparse and the sound is the same throughout, consisting of a droning engine noise with the odd tune on the title screen and in between flights. I liked the little extra touch provided by the still shots, though; it's amazing how many pig sties you can find from up in the air. Climb into the hot seat of a GeeBee 250 mph aircraft if you dare! "

► Flying high or biting the dust

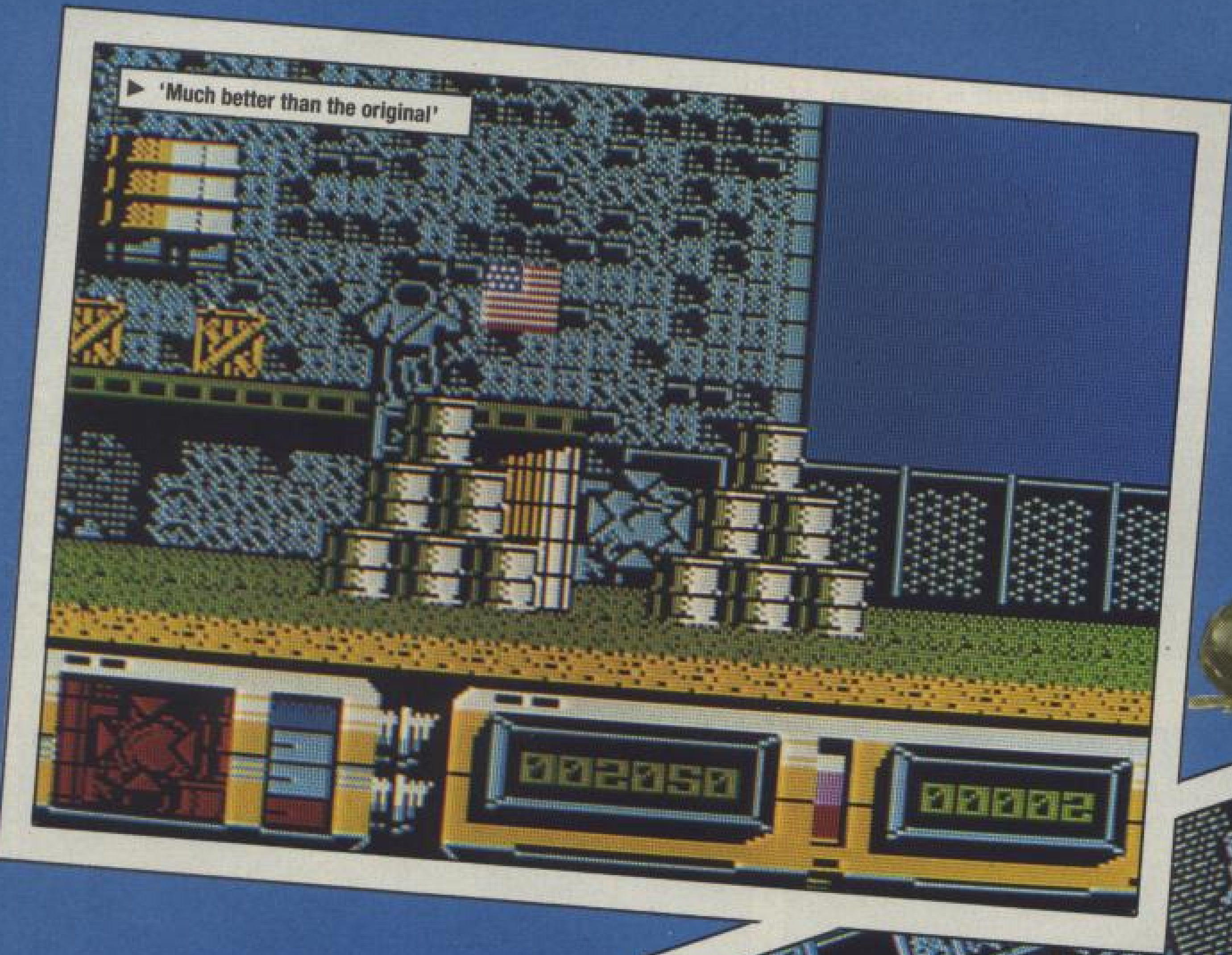


COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: atmospheric stills, but poor main screen graphics with simple backgrounds
Sound: monotonous engine noise with a few little title tunes
Options: definable keys
General rating: unfulfilled potential

Presentation	60%
Graphics	55%
Playability	70%
Addictive qualities	70%
OVERALL	**66%**

A·C·T·I·O·N F·O·R·C·E I I



► 'Much better than the original'





► A lantern flickers as you start a new mission

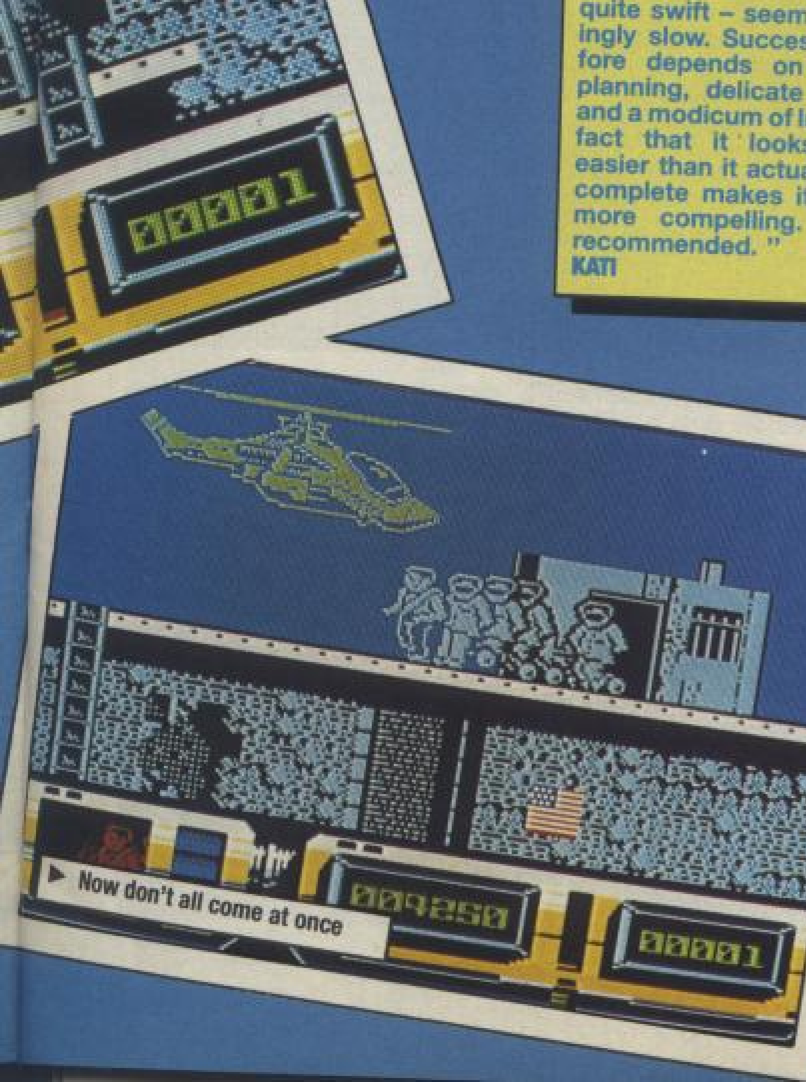


► Nobody gets away from Airtight

Producer: **Virgin Games**
Retail price: **£7.95 cassette, £14.95 disk**
Authors: **Andy Green and Martin Wheeler**







Now don't all come at once

The city is in a state of tension. Terrorists, backed by the evil organisation COBRA, have taken a number of innocent citizens hostage and are hiding them on the roofs of a series of derelict downtown buildings. Two members of the Action Force team are assigned to the mission. Their task: to penetrate enemy territory, locate the hostages and rendezvous with the chopper acting as air support. Quick Kick, expert in unarmed combat, attempts to scale the walls of each hideout, while Airtight (the player), provides protective cover fire.

The game is divided into several levels each of which comprises an empty apartment block. Advancing through a landscape of shattered windows, deserted fences and graveyards of abandoned oil drums, Quick Kick makes his way slowly up a network of rickety fire escapes. Disembodied eyes peer from the windows – their owners ready to drop lethal bombs; commando-style terrorists people the splintered doorways, and innocuous looking bins invariably contain highly trained and heavily armed fighters. Careful positioning of his superimposed target allows Airtight to shoot them before they attack.

As Quick Kick climbs each building he loses energy. Shooting the Stars and Stripes visible on the walls of some screens boosts his health. Should energy drop to zero, one of three lives is lost. A status panel shows energy remaining, current level and score as well as a magnified view of the target area.

Following the successful completion of the first level, Airtight can choose between three powerful weapons: machine gun, bazooka or bio gun. Each of these have slightly different properties: the bazooka fires more slowly than the machine gun but has a more devastating effect, while the bio gun quickly and efficiently reduces its victims to skeletal remains. However complex the weapon, however, the ultimate fate of Quick Kick and the hostages depends on the accurate coordination of Airtight's eyes and hand.

" Action Force II is a definite improvement over its predecessor (35%, Issue 46). Not only is the presentation very polished, but the gameplay is equally smooth. The colourful graphics are detailed and effectively animated, particularly the eyes peering warily from the windows and bins as they cautiously case the joint. The action itself is highly addictive and entertaining. The target is realistically difficult to place and constantly needs a steadying hand; you have to control the gun, not just position it. The need to replenish energy as well as eliminate the enemy calls for some fast manipulation of the joystick. The whole process is made tense by the fact that the target moves more slowly than the terrorists; movements from one end of the screen to the other – although quite swift – seem agonisingly slow. Success therefore depends on careful planning, delicate control and a modicum of luck. The fact that it looks much easier than it actually is to complete makes it all the more compelling. Highly recommended. "
KATI

" Comparing this to the original Action Force game is like comparing gold to the stuff you find at the bottom of all the mugs in CRASH Towers! This is absolutely fantastic. The graphics and the sound are excellent and colour is used extremely well in the game – and the loading screen (eight colours to a character square isn't bad!). Action Force II has the novel idea of swapping the role you play: instead of directing the main character that appears on-screen, you play yourself and have to cover your compatriot with a wide selection of guns. Some of the larger targets in the game such as the choppers, tanks and prison cells are all full of detail and do take some bashing! When you miss a baddie and he kills your little friend you have to start that level all over again, which does get a bit tedious. But whichever level you're on there's plenty to do, like electrocuting the hit-men and blowing up the dustbins! Action Force II is a brilliant action-packed game – buy it today. "
NICK

" This is a tremendous improvement over Action Force. The graphics – the main drawing point of the game – are incredibly detailed and coloured, bringing back memories of Dan Dare (also by Virgin Games). It's good to see the programmers using the Spectrum well – all aspects are exploited to their full. Even the game perspective is a bit different from most – you don't go out looking for trouble, it finds you. The game features many interesting enemies, from maniac dust bins to irate building inhabitants who throw weights out of the windows. It's bound to be a great game for high scoring arcade players, although I doubt the addictiveness will last as long among the rest of us. "
PAUL

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: superb. Every screen is packed with detail, and colour! The animation of all the characters – especially the deadly dustbin men – is smooth and realistic
Sound: although there's no title tune the spot effects are original and atmospheric
General rating: the ultimate in protection games. Great graphics and a mound of playability – the only thing it lacks is definable keys

Presentation	90%
Graphics	92%
Playability	89%
Addictive qualities	89%
OVERALL	**90%**

SUPER TROLLEY

Producer: **Mastertronic**
Retail price: **£1.99**
Author: **Andrew Collett**

Following a visit to the supermarket, Andrew Collett wrote to Jimmy Saville asking if he could Fix It for him to turn his game idea into a full-blown computer game. Jim got in touch with Mastertronic and this is the end result.

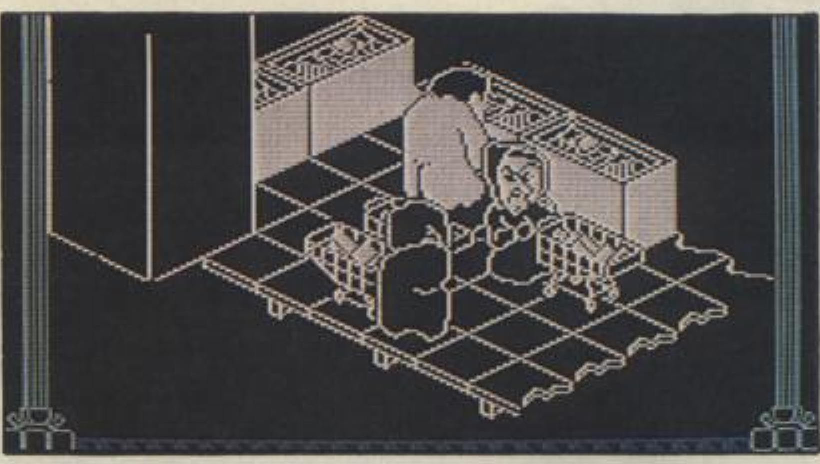
Life isn't easy for the dogsbody on work experience at Collett Hypermarket. The manager gives him a constant stream of tasks to complete: stacking shelves, running errands, rescuing lost babies and getting rid of dirty dogs. Winding his way through the maze of shelves and supermarket alleyways, pushing his unwieldy trolleyfull of stock, he has to avoid irate shoppers, complete his task and return to the back room within the given time limit.

Bonus points are scored for completing an errand quickly but bumping into other shoppers and trolleys gives the store a bad reputation; too many complaints and the manager throws him out.

The week begins on a calm and peaceful Monday and gets busier and busier, culminating in a feverish rush on Saturday afternoon. Should he survive all this, the dogsbody gradually works his way up the promotion ladder to manager and an act of final, sweet revenge: giving his former employer the boot.

KATI

" Jim may have Fixed It for Andrew but Mastertronic haven't Fixed It for his game. In principle the idea is a good one. The long suffering store dogsbody has a wide variety of different tasks to complete; runaway children, irate shoppers and unwanted dogs provide plenty of scope for humour. Unfortunately Mastertronic haven't made a very good job of a promising scenario. The graphics, though boldly drawn, tend to melt into one another and the gameplay itself lacks any sense of compulsion. So much time has been allocated to each job that only the laziest, slowest stackers would be unable to complete it. "



► I wonder if Jim would like a gateau for tea . . .

NICK

" Super Trolley **is a great idea for a game and has been excellently Fixed by Mastertronic. You can have great fun stacking shelves, chasing babies and catching stray dogs. It's also humorously frustrating: the shoppers are all old hags that have swapped their broomsticks for shopping trolleys and insist on charging into you when you're carrying a carton of eggs! Unfortunately, that's all there is to it. If there were a few more interesting tasks to do,** Super Trolley **would have been a great game, but, like the task it emulates, it just gets boring too soon. "**

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: very realistically drawn, but the jerky animation prevents flowing gameplay
Sound: decent title tune with a few feeble effects
Options: definable keys
General rating: a clever and original game design, but badly programmed. It just proves that Jim can't Fix everything

Presentation	57%
Graphics	59%
Playability	52%
Addictive qualities	57%
OVERALL	**54%**

TANIUM

Producer: **Players**
Retail price: **£1.99**
Author: **Colin Swinbourne**

Six years ago, an alien force set about terrorising the galaxy. As top gun of the Terran Spacefleet, our hero single-handedly repelled the invaders and, with the galaxy at peace, he then retired to the planet Sloar.

It wasn't peaceful for very long, however: the aliens are at it again. They have captured the planet Tanium, so our intrepid pilot is sent to quell the uprising – again.

The game starts with the player's ship zooming across the skies of Tanium, whereupon vicious alien hoards appear hell-bent on eliminating him. Destruction of alien formations earns the player a bonus, which takes the shape of increased firepower and speed.

The mission is aggravated by barriers that stretch vertically across the screen: careful flying is needed to negotiate the small openings in them.

Five lives are provided, although contact with either enemy ships, their laser fire or the barriers is fatal. Once a ship is destroyed, any extra equipment collected is also lost, so more blasting is needed to replace it.

CRITICISM

● **" The attack of the planet** Tanium **is colourfully portrayed; unfortunately, the 'Quariad' class fighter seems to be a second-rate mechanical mistake. Even with extra speed and firepower, control of the craft is painstakingly slow. Your laserfire is almost invisible and the aliens' advance is quite leisurely. This makes for some pretty insipid blasting, and lack of manoeuvrability inevitably involves the loss of lives. When this happens there's no explosion of any kind – you have to keep your eye constantly on the energy meter and 'number of lives' display. On the whole, cosy retirement on the planet Sloar is definitely a preferable option. "**
KATI



● " Tanium *is yet another game in the same vein as* Side Arms *and* Agent X II, *but this is quite good for a change! The graphics are neat and stand out well from the background. Colour is used as well as can be expected and it gets more colourful as you progress. There are some excellent alien patterns and some very detailed ships to blast away.* Tanium *also has a few good sound effects but the programmers haven't exactly gone mad with their synths. One addition that would have made it even more of a challenge is if the aliens actually shot back instead of just colliding with you. Still, a great game if you feel like a good blasting session! "*
NICK

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: small, mainly monochrome ships against a boring black background
Sound: shooting effects only
General rating: a poor clone of the horizontally scrolling arcade shoot 'em ups

Presentation	49%
Graphics	53%
Playability	42%
Addictive qualities	45%
OVERALL	**45%**


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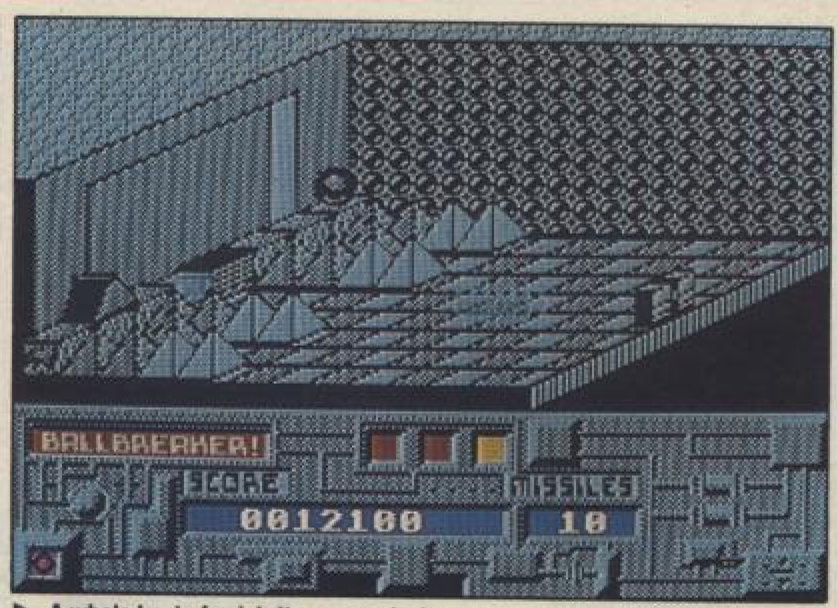
BALLBREAKER II

Producer: **CRL**
Retail price: **£7.95**
Authors: **The Zen Room**

The 3-D version of the *Breakout* concept was pioneered by CRL in *Ballbreaker* (64%, Issue 46), and its sequel comes with a pedigree: several screen designs come courtesy of Ian Andrew, creator of *Driller*, Jez Sands, author of *Starglider* and Simon Rockman, editor of *Amstrad User*.

The game takes place over 30 levels of monochrome 3-D screens, each containing an arrangement of pyramids, cylinders and cubes in various formations. A sphere drops into the screen from above; taking control of a bat capable of moving from left to right, the player attempts to keep the ball in play until the arrangement of bricks has been destroyed. Each time it hurtles off the edge of the screen one of four lives is lost.

Different blocks have different



▶ **A whole host of celebrity screen designs**

KATI

" In theory a 3-D Breakout **game is an innovative and original concept – in practice it doesn't quite come off. By nature of its design the screen always hides the ball behind the bat when you need to see it most. The game also lacks a sense of perspective: despite the 3-D graphics the ball always looks as if it's skimming across the surface of a 2-D screen and the rebound angle is the only indication of where it's actually meant to be. Still, the music proves that you can simulate more than the sound of an electric razor with a Spectrum sound chip and the graphics are impressive. Whether you take the risk depends on how much of a** Breakout **connoisseur you are. "**

PAUL

" Unlike film follow-ups, computer sequel's are usually much better than their predecessors (Match Day **and** Arkanoid **for example) –** Ballbreaker II **is a sad break in the trend. If only the programmers had listened to, and corrected, the criticism levelled at the original game they'd have had a fast, playable and addictive little game – but they didn't, so they haven't. Some of the levels are particularly infuriating due to bad programming – try firing a missile at a piled-up block on Level 2 and getting back to the other side of the screen for the ball – impossible. As the old saying goes, '2 D s are better than 3' (when it comes to** Breakout **clones). "**

NICK

" It's bad enough having to put up with 2-D Breakout **games but when it comes to 3-D versions it's beyond a joke.** Ballbreaker II **is excellently presented and has a nice tune with some great sound effects; it's just a pity the game itself isn't as good. The backgrounds are messy, being far too detailed, and play is hindered since your view of the ball is often obscured by the bat. The job of destroying all the blocks is made a mite easier by the few missiles you're armed with at the beginning, but these soon run out and then you're left with just your luck!** Ballbreaker II **may hold your attention for a while but it will never have any lasting appeal. "**

LEE ENFIELD IS 'SPACE ACE'

Producer: **Infogrames**
Retail price: **£7.95**
Author: **Richard Bottet**

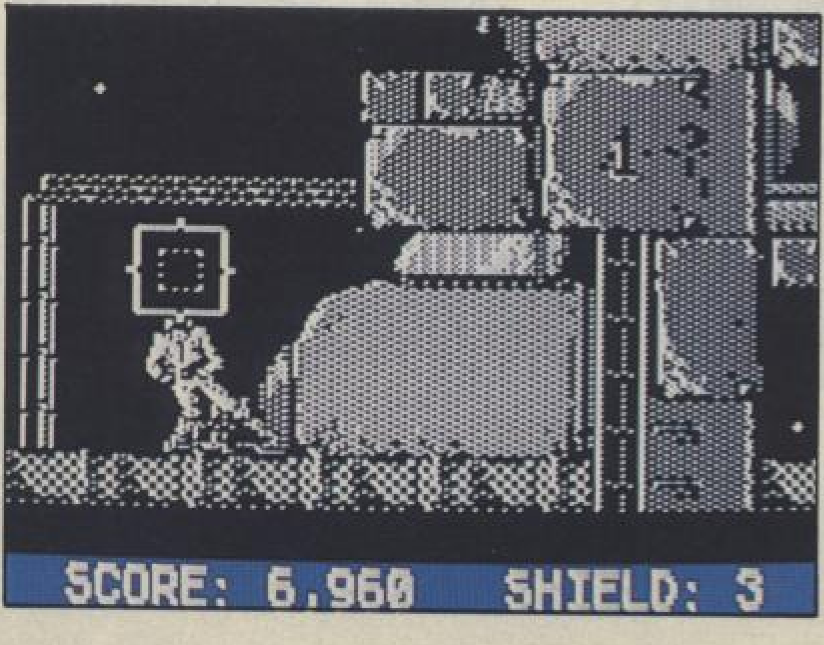
Lee Enfield, master of time travel and troubleshooter extraordinaire, has been called to the 22nd Century to rescue his old friend Bill. With no support other than his sophisticated laser rifle he attempts to blast the forces sent by the formidable Yellow Shadow.

The battle takes place among the complex structures of the planet's stark, grey surface, as displayed from Lee's viewpoint. Camouflaged against futuristic walkways, panels and girders the enemy, comprising robot soldiers, galactic monsters and humanoid snipers, individually train their weapons upon the heroic troubleshooter.

Lee's sophisticated laser rifle is sensitive to the enemy's location and indicates, by an arrow at the bottom of the screen, the direction in which he needs to train his sights. It gives off a ringing signal which becomes extremely high pitched when an opponent is ready to shoot. Should Lee fail to locate and kill the sniper before he fires, one of his six lives is lost. However, a shortlived magnetic shield can be employed for extra protection.

To complete each round, Lee must destroy the magnetic meteor globe, a bouncing sphere which throws his laser rifle's sights askew. Once this mesmerising enemy has been defeated, a lift arrives to transport him up to the next level.

Three grades of difficulty permit Lee to progress from novice to space ace at his own pace. His score, which can win him extra lives, is displayed at the base of the screen.



CRITICISM

● " Lee Enfield, celebrated space ace turns out to be a fairly ordinary warrior with a souped-up machine gun. Graphically, the 22nd Century is out of focus: a shapeless blurr of monochrome pixels, in which the sprites are splodgy and difficult to distinguish. Gameplay lacks depth and compulsion, and none of the action bears any relation to the real object of mission – the rescue of Bill. Those snipers which *are* distinguishable as humans die so slowly you can't be sure whether they're actually dead and so need to carry on shooting gratuitously to make sure. Considering the quality of some budget games, its ridiculous to demand such an exorbitantly high price for a game as bland and dull as this. "
KATI

● **" What a weird title!** Lee Enfield Is 'Space Ace' **is identical in gameplay to the now-aging** Prohibition**, also by Infogrames (quelle surprise!). The background that you play on is very detailed as are the aliens that you have to shoot. When you mix the two together, though, the result is rather messy. Soundwise, there's just the basic beep of the counter and a realistic machine gun noise when you shoot. Infogrames seem to be very good at producing games with good graphics but absolutely appalling gameplay. Shooting the odd alien before it shoots you isn't exactly great fun and soon grows boring.** Lee Enfield Is 'Space Ace' **would be more suited to a budget label: £7.95 definitely isn't value for money. "**
NICK

● " *Whats this then?* Prohibition *with corrupted graphics? Sure looks like it, nothing else has*

properties, as indicated by a catalogue which can be examined before play. Those blocks impervious to the ball's touch must be destroyed by one of an initial arsenal of ten missiles. Other bricks hide extra weaponry, bombs, points or bonus lives; some alter the size of the bat, allow instant access to the next round or need to be struck from a specific angle. On later levels the destruction of specific bricks triggers the release of aliens, whose fatal advance can only be stopped by firing a missile or setting off a bomb.

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: ornate blocks and baddies hide the poor 3-D perspective
Sound: joyful title tune (continuous through the game on the 128K) and original spot effects
Options: definable keys
General rating: a poor follow-up to the original. No improvements – if anything a bit slower

Presentation	68%
Graphics	63%
Playability	52%
Addictive qualities	55%
OVERALL	**56%**

changed – or improved. How anyone can ask people to pay £7.95 for such a blatant copy of the original is beyond me – and an inferior follow-up at that. There are hundreds of words that come near describing Lee Enfield Is 'Space Ace' *– insipid, monotonous, tedious – but few can actually capture the boredom created by this uneventful game. All there is to it is a few monochrome graphics, and due to their design even these turn into a background looking more like washing-up powder than a computer game. Infogrames succeeded with their previous release* Sidewalk, *but this comes nowhere near the mark. "*
PAUL

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: very hard to distinguish the baddies from the backgrounds
Sound: simplistic spot effects
Options: three levels of difficulty
General rating: complexity at the expense of playability

Presentation	52%
Graphics	40%
Playability	39%
Addictive qualities	52%
OVERALL	**49%**

RAMPARTS

Producer: **GO!**
Retail price: **£8.99 cassette, £12.99 disk**
Authors: **Future Concepts**

Sir Griswold and Sir Larkin, wielders of the lance and once gentle knights of old, have been cursed by the Evil One. The effect of this unfortunate enchantment has been to magnify them both to several times their original size. Intent on revenge, they scour the countryside in search of their medieval antagonist. The buildings of several hostile barons stand in the way; their only chance of survival is to smash and ransack each castle in turn.

The knights' quest may be undertaken solo or in tandem. Play is divided into a series of levels, each of which comprises a solitary fortress. Armed with a ball and chain, the knights attempt to shin up the walls of the fortress, destroying as much of the structure as possible in the process.

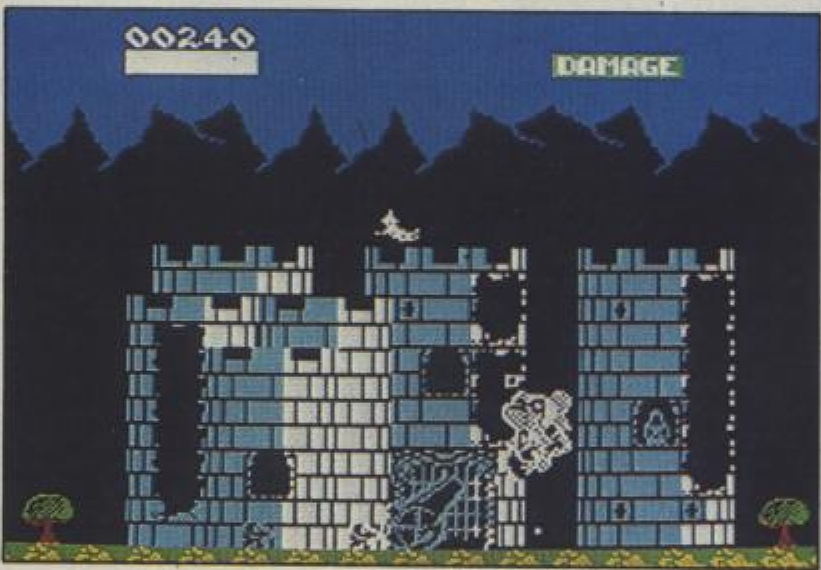
The castle's inhabitants put up a valiant defence: damsels fire bullets from the windows, tiny soldiers direct cannons from the ground and flying defenders drop pellets from above. By avoiding bullets and clubbing their diminutive adversaries each knight can ensure that minimum damage is inflicted.

Encased in the masonry of each castle are a number of bonus icons which are revealed as the edifice is destroyed. Food boosts energy and gold increases score; poisons swallowed inadvertently radically reduce health.

Once sufficient damage has been incurred, the towers totally collapse. With each fortress razed to the ground, the giant knights move on to the next.

NICK

" Although Ramparts **is very similar to** Rampage, **in my opinion it is a much superior game. The great medieval music and** Old English Text create a marvellous atmosphere. Once you've got through the numerous title tunes and slick presentation you emerge into a version of Rampage **with castles instead of skyscrapers and giant knights instead of monsters. The little men that run along the bottom of the walls can get really vicious with their massive cannons and other wounding weapons; I found it almost impossible to complete Level One on my own, but once you get two players on the job the higher levels of the game become more accessible.** Ramparts **is great – but only if you don't already have** Rampage. **"**



► **There's no monkeying about in** *Ramparts*



PAUL

" It's very hard to choose between Activision's Rampage **and GO!'s** Ramparts **– both are extremely competent games in their field. However, I find this game type terribly boring, uneventful and repetitive. Graphically,** Ramparts **fulfils all its objectives admirably. The castles are ornately drawn and all the characters intricately detailed and animated, although sometimes it's hard to distinguish them from the background, due to the monochromatic play area. All in all a credible climb 'n' crush arcade game – although not for owners of** Rampage: **they're far too similar. "**

KATI

" Ramparts **is not only reminiscent of** Rampage **in name: gameplay, even down to the airborne arrival of the heroes is practically identical, and the medieval scenario does very little to enhance the atmosphere of a basic and simplistic theme. Bashing structures of bricks and mortar into piles of rubble would have very little to recommend itself even if the presentation were excellent. As it stands, the graphics are undistinguished (although the collapse of the towers is quite effective) and the sound effects are unremarkable. It's often difficult getting a foothold on the buildings and a lot of time is wasted, under constant enemy bombardment, attempting to find the right place. As a full price game** Ramparts **puts the possibilities of the Spectrum to shame. "**

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: the mixture of characters and buildings often proves confusing, but all add to the medieval setting of the game
Sound: beautiful harpsichordian tune and basic bash effects
Options: one or two players
General rating: *Rampage* has already done what *Ramparts* wanted to do

Presentation	70%
Graphics	67%
Playability	67%
Addictive qualities	60%
OVERALL	**61%**

B·R·A·I·N·S·T·O·R·M

A CRASH Smash

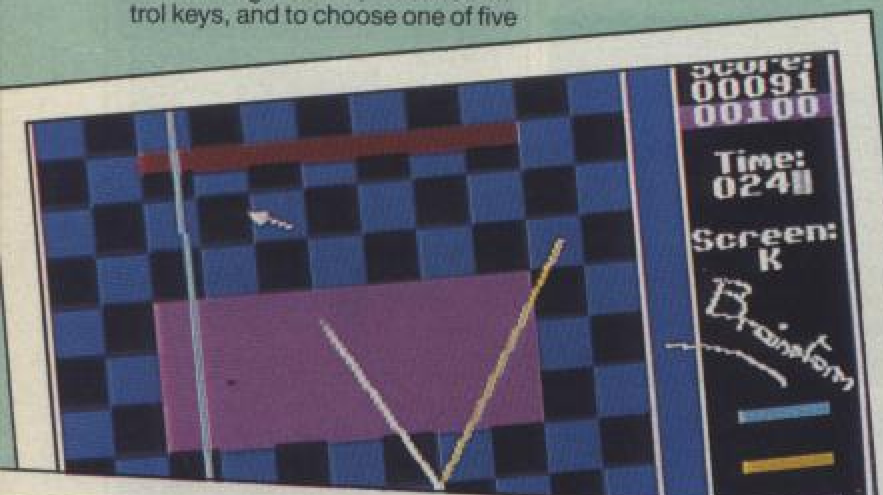
Brainstorm is a journey into an arcade strategy game, in which the player uses his wits and reflexes to survive the many devious traps and pitfalls of the game. The main objective is to score as many points as possible within a set time limit. This is achieved by trapping a ball within the red point scoring areas scattered around the screen, using manoeuvrable coloured lines.

The player is initially faced with several options: to play the game, view the high scores, redefine control keys, and to choose one of five starting screens and three difficulty levels. Once these decisions have been made, the battle commences. There are 26 screens, lettered from A to Z, each more difficult to complete than the last.

The playing screen is split into coloured squares, with the player in control of three coloured lines and a cursor. The squares are coloured either red, green, magenta, blue or black. Hitting a red square increases the player's score, magenta squares decrease the player's score, green warp the ball to a different part of the screen, and both black and blue squares are neutral, affecting neither the ball nor the scoreline.

The player has to trap the ball, using one or all of the lines (accessed by positioning the cursor over the desired colour box, and hitting the fire button), within reach of a red area of the screen, whilst attempting to avoid either the magenta or green parts. The player is provided with 100 points, and a target score, highlighted in red, of 100 points. As the game progresses the current score rises and falls, according to the ball's path across the screen. The ultimate aim is to end the time limit with the current score matching or exceeding the target. If the score drops below the target, however, the colour of the target score changes from red to magenta. If more points aren't scored pretty damn pronto, the game ends.

Once the appropriate amount of points are scored, the player is then whisked onto the next screen, and his previous score is transformed into the start-of-level score and target. This carries on throughout the game, and if the player's score reaches zero, or the current score falls below the target, then the game ends.





"A game with a brain, innovative, and just for once not a clone, is a rare and exceptional occurrence. Deviously difficult patterns arranged in bold contrasting colours are designed to get the sleepiest brain cells tingling; you can never re-position a line to the exact pixel so no two games can be precisely the same. Presentation is slick but purely functional – puzzleability is all and three stages of difficulty including a myriad of tesselated patterns should keep you hooked for ages. Simple ideas are often the best; in this case originality wins over technical complexity to create an immediately playable and startlingly addictive game."
KATI

"If you are into brain teasers that frustrate and blow your mind then Brainstorm **is the game for you. The graphics, colour and sound may not be up to much and the idea behind it is ridiculously simple but the game sure makes up for these losses with addictiveness and playability. You just ring the red block with one of the three colours and then wait for your victim to walk into your trap. The only trouble is, the balls have a mind of their own: one second they may be on the red background but the next they're on a purple and losing points!** Brainstorm **is wickedly addictive; play it and you'll never put your joystick down again!"**
NICK

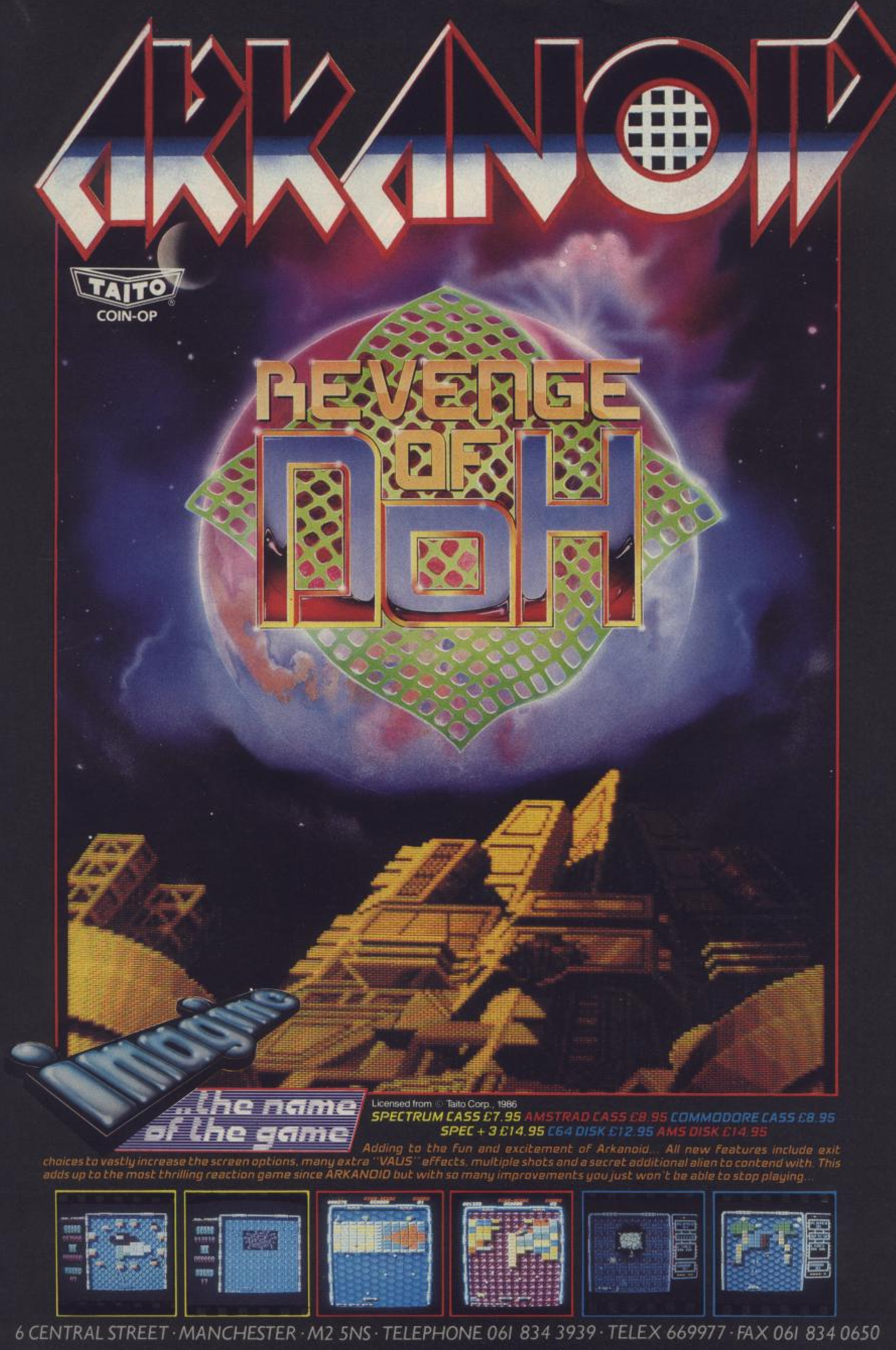
"We've had Thrust, Harvey Headbanger **and** Zolyx **(only successful on the C64, however) from Firebird, and now there's** Brainstorm **– the latest in a famed list of simple-but-addictive Firebird games. Pete Cooke (programmer of** Tau Ceti, Academy **and** Micronaut One**) shows exactly how successful a Spectrum game can be if you concentrate on the addictiveness and playability – not the graphics and sound. There's not much you can say about** Brainstorm **– it's very addictive, entertaining and surprisingly simple to get into. Very few games appeal to all games players, but I would venture to say that this is one such product. Another game that every Spectrum owner should have."**
PAUL

Producer: **Firebird**
Retail price: **£1.99**
Author: **Pete Cooke**

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: colour is an integral part of the game, and is well used
Sound: simple spot effects
Options: three levels of difficulty, choice of four starting screens
General rating: the simple ones last longest, and you'll be playing this for months to come. £1.99 for so much pleasure – you can't go wrong

Presentation	80%
Graphics	57%
Playability	91%
Addictive qualities	92%
OVERALL	**90%**



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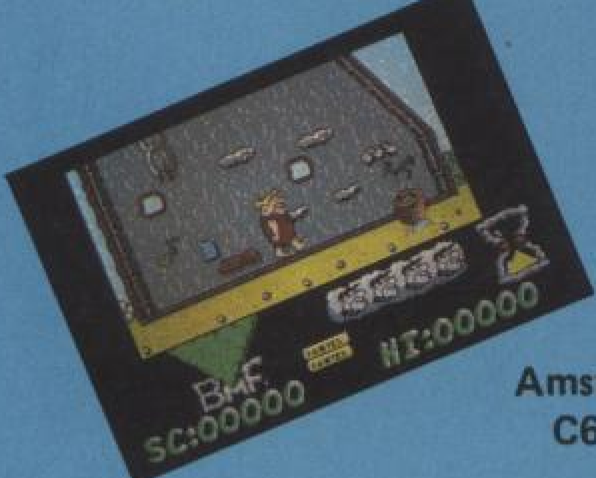
PRESENTS

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CRAZY CARS

Producer: **Titus**
Retail price: **£9.95**
Authors: **Titus**

The American Cross Country Prestige Cars Race, the craziest contest of them all, is about to take place. It covers three of the continent's toughest tracks and crosses the rugged and punishing terrain of Florida, Arizona and the NASA (sic).

The race comprises five levels, each divided into several stages which run over a time limit. The player can choose from a selection of five high performance cars, and successful completion of a race within the time limit rewards the driver with a more powerful vehicle. Beginning with something like the relatively humble Porsche 911 Turbo the player can progress via the Lamborghini Countach to the ultimate in racing cars, the Ferrari GTO.

Contestants line up on the starting grid, and a flick of the fire button sees the player's mean machine hurtle along a black tarmac track which twists and turns through rugged, sandy terrain.

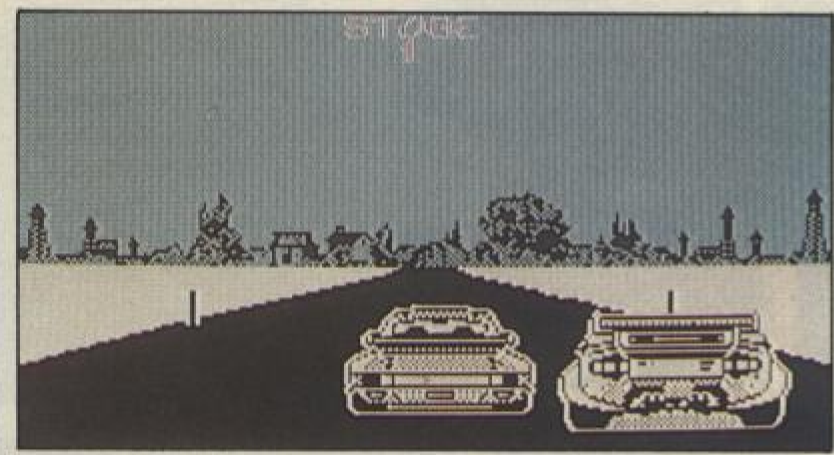
Dips and bumps in the road make control of each turbo charged monster more precarious. High speed contact with either hurls the car momentarily into the air and out of control. More experienced drivers can exploit these uneven conditions and take the opportunity of soaring gracefully over obstructing opponents before landing with calculated panache on the other side.

Cornering requires extra care; racing off the track or plunging headlong into road markers severely slows down progress. Explosions never occur however; each car bears a charmed life and collision with other racers results in nothing worse than crippling deceleration and crucial loss of time.

Tracks become progressively more difficult with more twists, more bumps and more determined opponents. A status display at the head of the screen shows current speed and units of time remaining.

KATI

" The fastest, craziest, meanest cross country race turns out to be one of the greyest, severest and most sober, run-of-the-mill grand prix simulations. The graphics are disappointingly basic; the scruffy grey background never changes and the tarmac is so black that the outline of the bumps merges into the raggedy edge of the road. It's not a crucial drawback, though, since for most of the time, despite all talk of opponents, the only crazy car on the track is your own. Having said that, a lonesome race is better than no race at all and this one is more than just competently portrayed. Controls and scrolling are smooth; graded difficulty and increasingly tight time limits ensure compulsive gameplay, although the scoring system is ridiculously generous. One final quibble regards the congratulatory high score message which declares the player 'One of the fastest men in the world'. As girls play computer games as well it would have been more appropriate and just as easy to substitute 'drivers' for 'men'. "



► Road hog!

MARK

" While some lucky people can afford to buy the cars featured here, the rest of us have to either carry on dreaming, or alternatively play Crazy Cars**. Graphically the game is good, with the nicely drawn cars zipping around the often tortuous racetracks, jostling and barging each other out of the way in an attempt to be the first across the finishing line. My only niggle is that the road would have benefitted from either road markings or road signs, since on many occasions I was caught unawares by a sudden hairpin bend. Initial interest is high as your car careers around bends, and flies into the air on hitting the many bumps that adorn the track. Although early stages are fairly easy to complete, later tracks almost need the player to possess the skills of a rally driver to survive. I enjoyed playing** Crazy Cars**; If you're a budding boy – or girl – racer, take a good look. "**

PAUL

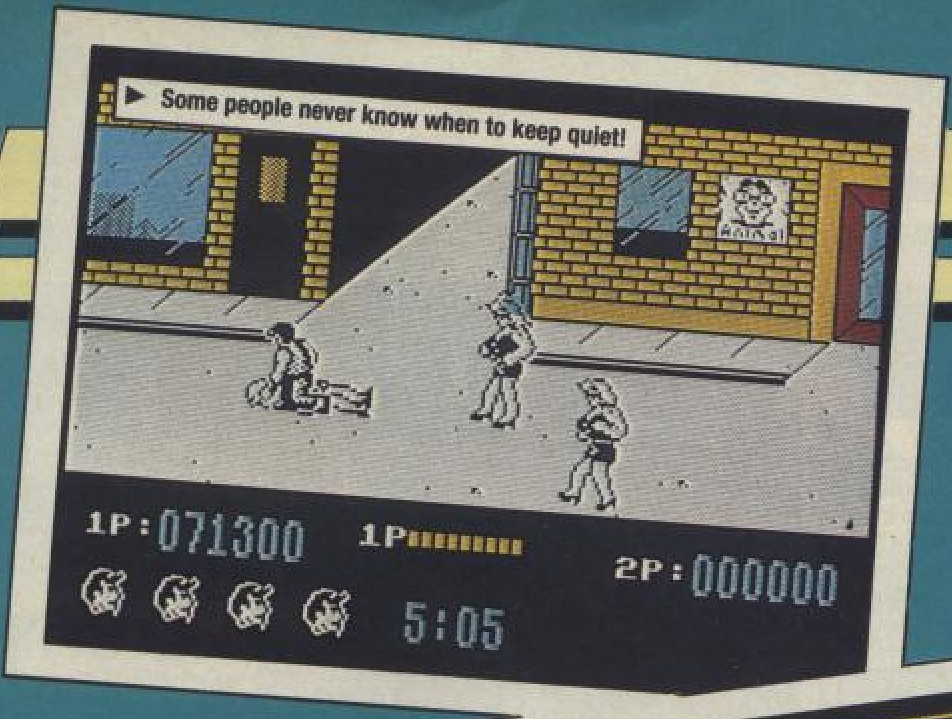
" If Out Run **and** Crazy Cars **had a head on collision the result would be one of the best games on the Spectrum.** Crazy Cars **has all the playability and addictive qualities that** Out Run **lacked. Sadly, this first game from Titus lacks any graphical flamboyance; the game is attractive without being impressive – unlike** Out Run **whose speed suffered due to the amount of detailed graphics crammed on-screen.** Crazy Cars **certainly has some aesthetic appeal – the distant city is very smart – but its main attraction is the speed at which you fly around the track. All** Crazy Cars **needs to make it an** Out Run**-beater is a white line down the middle of the road and a few signs and bushes on the side of the track. As it is, though, things are going to be very close between the two. A great game for a new company trying to break into the market. "**



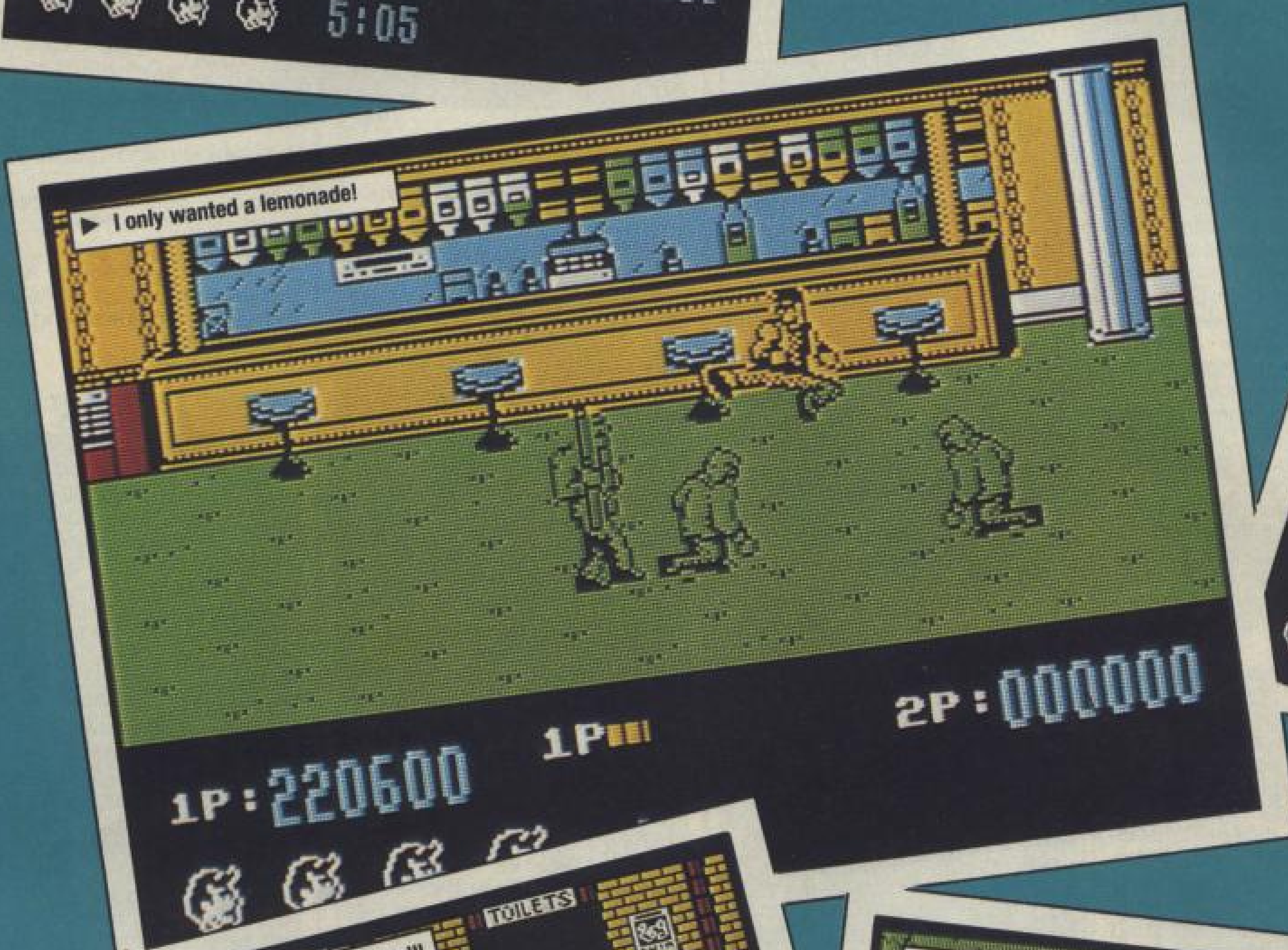
COMMENTS

Joysticks: Sinclair
Graphics: the three main cars are recognisable, with a simple road perspective
Sound: only a realistic revving sound
Options: five levels of difficulty and a choice of three makes of car
General rating: a faster *Out Run*, without the graphical appeal

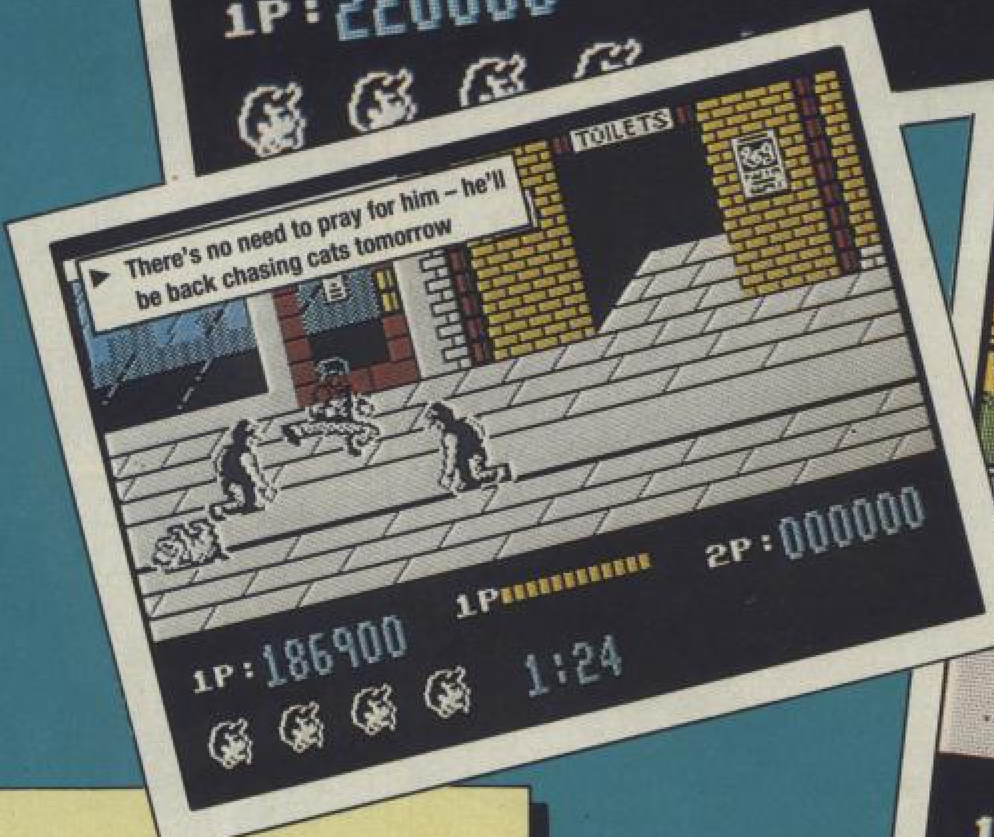
Presentation	58%
Graphics	55%
Playability	70%
Addictive qualities	68%
OVERALL	**65%**

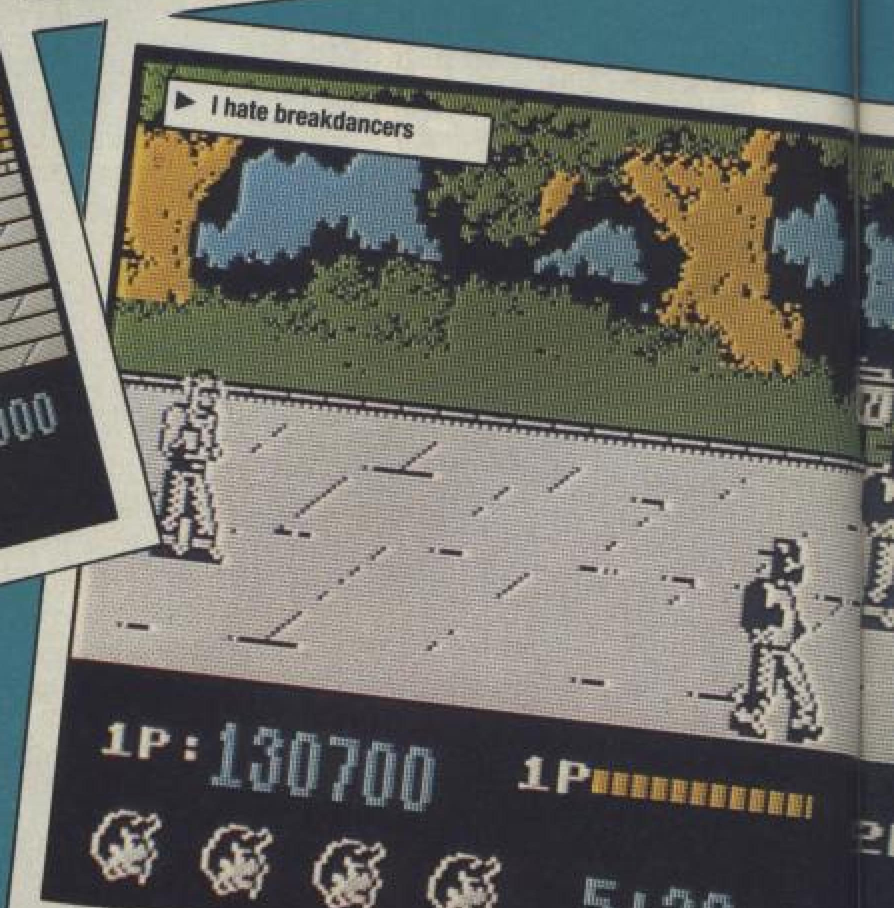


T·A·R·G·E·T









Producer: **Imagine**
Retail price: **£7.95 cassette, £14.95 disk**
Author: **Mike Lamb**

R•E•N•E•G•A•D•E

The tragic death of your brother Matt, murdered while investigating the underworld dealings of gangland boss Mr Big, cannot go unavenged. Driven by a sense of burning injustice you make your way through the seedy streets of Scumville, a labyrinthine nest of crime and black market dealings, to a final show-down with the notorious gangster himself.

The adventure can be undertaken alone or with a companion (whose presence makes the competition doubly tough) over five multiloaded levels. The action shifts from a dangerous multistorey car park to seedy night time streets via a seemingly harmless city park and an overpopulated shopping mall, finally climaxing in Mr Big's headquarters in a sleazy bar.

The inhabitants of Scumville have little goodwill to spare: motor cyclists, skinheads, Beastie Boys fans and ladies of the night, often armed and always spoiling for a fight, attempt to thwart your progress through the sinister city streets.

You have spent a lot of time cultivating an athletic physique, however, which enables you to carry out various jumping, kicking and punching actions with relative ease. Knocking down a weapon-carrying opponent gives you the chance to pick up his club, axe or stick as it falls; an extra points bonus is awarded for making use of objects as well as fists.

Each time a blow is sustained, your health, indicated by an energy meter, is diminished. Complete loss of strength results in the loss of one of three lives.

Once all current opponents have been subdued in a section, a door opens on to the next urban battleground. Survive through to the final confrontation in the bar, beat your way past Mr Big's bodyguards and the gangland boss lies at your mercy. Succeed in destroying him and Matt's body can finally lie at rest in his Scumville grave.

" Bish! Bash! Bosh! Now this is what I call a beat 'em up. Things sure have changed since Renegade **(89%, Issue 44). The folks in the neighbourhood have taken a change for the worse – it's no longer safe to walk the streets, for fear of being bashed over the head by some axe-wielding Beastie Boy. But now you're fit and ready to take on any old bald bouncer with a snooker cue. The moves that you possess are beautifully animated and very smoothly carried out, though whether they'll be able to slice the rubber dresses off the busty women on Level Two is another matter entirely. Mike Lamb (he of** Combat School **fame) has done Imagine proud. Forget the aspirins,** Target Renegade **will soon get rid of that pent-up nervous tension. "**
PAUL



...one's going to get the chop

" Do you ever come home from school or work and feel like bashing the dog's head in? Well if you do, don't bother because you can take out all your tempers on the baddies in Target Renegade **– and I think your dog will be relieved! This game has got to be the best bash 'em up of all time. It's packed full of great graphics, colour and sound and with five levels of pure addictiveness; you can't go wrong. Each level holds different backgrounds and baddies that range from motorbikers that try to run you down to dogs that insist on having your head for supper! The multiload spoils the excitement now and then but once the next level has loaded you soon get back into the swing of things. In most of the early levels you can just kick and punch your way through but as you progress the baddies get more cunning and begin to duck and dive away from your efforts. Level five was the worst with bald headed hard-men that beat you up with snooker cues and a boxer that could run for Mr Universe!** Target Renegade **is a great follow up to** Renegade **and deserves to do well. "**
NICK

" Target Renegade **is slickly presented, and features colourful and generally well defined graphics. The various guises of Scumville vice, from safety-pinned skinheads to brutal Beastie Boys fans, are threateningly menacing – especially when the villains headbutt you from behind! The sound is purely functional although the minimalist biffing and thumping noises add to the sinister atmosphere. The gameplay itself leaves very little to be desired; control of the various jumping, kicking and punching movements is extremely smooth. The number of opponents to beat and the variety of weapons to collect add spice to what might otherwise become an overly repetitious theme. One minor drawback is the jerky flick screen scrolling; the edge of one screen turns into the the centre of the next without warning and leaves you with a case of momentary disorientation. Don't let this put you off though –** Target Renegade **is as good as its predecessor, if not better. If you're after some exciting beat 'em up action this is a good excuse to part with your hard-earned cash. "**
KATI



COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: every participant is full of character, having his or her own particular moves and style. The backgrounds add real atmosphere to the game, bringing the action right into your home
Sound: rough 'n' tough title tune with assorted mean ditties at the start of each of the five levels. Average spot effects
Options: definable keys, one or two players (simultaneously), music on/off
General rating: *Renegade* was never this much fun. More content and tougher characters make *Target Renegade* the ultimate challenge

Presentation	83%
Graphics	89%
Playability	93%
Addictive qualities	93%
OVERALL	**90%**

GUNSMOKE



Producer: **GO!**
Retail price: **£8.99 cassette, £12.99 disk**
Authors: **Topo Soft**

Being Sheriff of a Wild West town isn't easy. When trouble comes to town, it arrives with a bang. And trouble has just arrived in the shape of Angel Face and his notorious henchmen . . .

The first level of this vertically scrolling *Commando* variant sees the player strolling along the street of his beloved town, running the gauntlet of pistol packin' hoodlums who attempt to gun him down. The baddies run towards the sheriff, guns blazing, or charge along on horseback throwing bombs which bounce across the street before exploding.

The player starts the game with four lives, but shooting the stars which appear occasionally reveals an extra life, a points bonus or a stick of dynamite, contact with which proves fatal. Running over each symbol utilises these handy additions.

PAUL

" If the arcade game, Gunsmoke, **is anything like the computer game I pity the person that's put any money in the slot – the game concept is so boring! However, the presentation is at least up to their usual high standard: the individual people all have their own characteristics and the saloons and ranches are colourful and detailed. What the game lacks, though, is enough variation to get you back to it after finishing a game. I couldn't really be bothered to start again; I knew where I was going and what would result from it. If only you could walk around a larger play area, or even turn around and go back on yourself, the game would be much more of a quest and not so laborious. However, the few that *do* like the arcade game can't really fault the conversion. "**

KATI

" Another arcade conversion bites the dust. Admittedly a lot of attention has gone into peripheral details, particularly the action-packed loading screen and the gun-spinning joystick selection process, but the central graphics are unspectacular. In theory the game, a sort of Wild West Ikari Warriors, **has plenty to recommend it. However, practice proves otherwise. The odds are stacked against the Sheriff: trigger-happy bandits constantly attempt to shoot him in the back although he can only blast diagonally and forwards. At close quarters the sheriff stands stiff and paralysed, while his opponents' ability to run is superhumanly improved. The challenge to beat the faultless computer 'next time' has a frustrating and obsessive edge, but considering the price, it's probably better not to take it up. "**

MARK

" After enjoying Bedlam, **I loaded** Gunsmoke **with a great deal of expectation. Although I give GO! merit for the presentation on the control option screen, in-game status display, and the wanted posters, the game itself is pretty dire. For a start play is very difficult, as I found to my cost with life after life being blown away by the hoards of small, black blobby sprites that fire two shots whilst my character thinks about firing one. Another annoying habit the enemy had was to appear from the bottom of the screen with guns blazing. The poor old Sheriff can't do a thing about it, because he can't turn round! I didn't even make it to the end of the first screen, but I'm sure that fact won't lose me any sleep at night. "**

MEGA-APOCALYPSE

Producer: **Martech**
Retail price: **£8.99**
Authors: **programmed by John Wilson from original idea by Simon Nicol**

Latest data from the Institute of Advanced Research indicates that there are more than one or two undiscovered planets in the depths of the solar system. The government of the future refuses to concern itself with such outdated issues as cultural exchange, though. Each potentially intelligent race is potentially hostile; best to blast them now and think about it later.

The mission is undertaken by a solo monochrome pod, equipped with a single laser, which journeys at high speed through a whirlpool of stars. At the beginning of each round bonus objects are belched up from the junkyard of 23rd century space. Calculated

NICK

" Mega-Apocalypse **is anything but mega! It's really just a glorified asteroids game with a bit of space invaders thrown in for luck. The graphics are badly defined and your ship is difficult to control at first. The planet section has about the best graphics with craters showing on the otherwise green blobs, but to cheer all the screens up there is a fabulous display of swirling dots simulating a starry sky. There's no shortage of things to listen to with a constantly playing tune and sound effects over the top of that. It's just a pity the game isn't a bit better with more things to do. "**

PAUL

" Mega-Apocalypse **and mega-hard! If there's one thing that Martech's latest game has got it's addictiveness. It may be lacking in graphics – which are poor and flickery at the best of times – and sound – absolutely none on the 48K (all shoot 'em ups need effects for atmosphere) – but it does instill that gut feeling that you can't be beaten by a game of this (poor) calibre. If you're thinking of buying** Mega-Apocalypse **then don't expect the flashy graphics and smooth animation of other versions: it's very basic and not *really* worth £8.99 considering the lack of content. Still, it should keep you glued to the keyboard for some time. "**

► **It may be *Mega*, but is it any good?**



KATI

" Revelling unashamedly in the sadistic pleasure of bombing and blasting through the space is a pleasure which most shoot 'em ups stifle in a 'save the world' scenario or quite simply fail to provide. Not so Mega-Apocalypse. **The action, enhanced by the exhilarating soundtrack, is fast, frenzied and immediately addictive. Perversely the presentation itself isn't at all polished: the swirling movement of the stars has to compensate for lack of colour and complexity, while collision detection is occasionally messy. The apocalypse is not altogether as mega as the advertising claims but it does deserve something more than just mild success. "**

Once the end of the landscape is reached, a shoot-out occurs between the Sheriff and the end-of-level-baddie, whose face appears on a wanted poster at the start of the section.

The game continues in this fashion, through the railroad station, the canyon and across rapids on a raft, culminating in a meadow where a boomerang-throwing Angel Face is confronted in the final showdown.

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: the characters are detailed but too small. Buildings are colourful and distinct
Sound: pop, pop from the guns
Options: definable keys
General rating: due to the coin-op's restrictions *Gunsmoke* could never be better than a boring shoot 'em up

Presentation	70%
Graphics	56%
Playability	46%
Addictive qualities	50%
OVERALL	**54%**

collision tactics equip the dextral pilot with a range of technical improvements: rotate motors plus autofire, speed up thrusts, missiles, extra lives and bonus points.

As the ship hurtles through the void the pilot encounters a series of gyrating comets, plus planets which grow in size as they approach. As their size increases, so does their immunity to laser fire and they also become increasingly difficult to avoid. At this stage contact means instant death.

Successful extermination of all the heavenly bodies in each round gives the triumphant pilot instant access to the next set of bonuses and another, even more dangerous, planetary system.

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: poor and simply designed foreground ships with a swirling background of stars
Sound: 'exhilarating' 128K tune only
General rating: a poor, but futuristic, *Asteroids* clone

Presentation	60%
Graphics	48%
Playability	59%
Addictive qualities	59%
OVERALL	**58%**

GOTHIK

Producer: **Firebird**
Retail price: **£7.95**
Author: **Paul Hutchinson**

Long ago, an evil lord threw the lands far to the north of Belorn into turmoil and confusion. He captured the wizard, Ansalon, took away his cloak and divided his body into six parts. Each part was placed separately in a secret chamber guarded by a mighty demon.

The quest to recover and reunite the wizard with his robe may be attempted by one of two vikings: Olaf (renowned for his strength) or Olga (wise in the ways of magic). The search takes place in four dark towers, each comprising seven floors of maze-like passages and rooms. The strange inhabitants of these grim surroundings prove hostile, but each warrior carries a supply of arrows, bouncing electricity bolts and fireballs with which to protect themselves.



► Mr or Mrs?

Initially the player is in possession of two cantrips which enable him to burn away obstructing bracken (allowing access to other parts of the tower) and transform gold into food.

Treasure, extra arrows and other bonus items can be collected, such as relics, which have the power to make the player invisible, and potions to increase fire power or replace energy.

Once the wizard parts and cloak have been reunited, the wizard's power is restored and peace can be returned to the land north of Belorn.

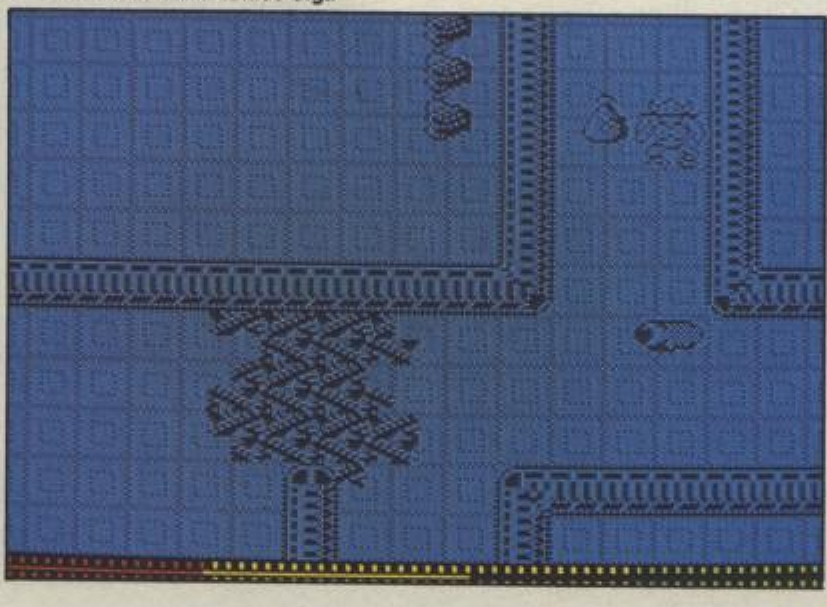
KATI

" The presentation of Gothik, **which owes a lot to** Dandy **and** Druid, **is slick. Some of the squelchy spot effects are humorous and the figures are detailed. Unfortunately, the variety promised by the complex instructions fails to materialise: long periods are spent stumbling aimlessly through the maze of corridors and movement is often pointlessly impaired by burning carcasses which block passages long after the alien is dead. Although there are 32 types of potion only three or four seem to recur, and accessing rooms by burning bracken is much less interesting than the traditional method of collecting keys; at least the latter involves some element of risk. Valiant vikings are unlikely to give up pillaging for a quest as mediocre as this. "**

PAUL

" Talk about more of the same! I've seen more Gauntlet **clones in the last year than I care to remember. The simple fact remains that the concept is now repetitive and dated.** Gothik **contains few advances over early spell games like** Dandy**. The potions may do different things but the game is basically the same. And why, all of a sudden, have these games gone monochromatic? Are they going down the same route as shoot 'em ups? There's no need for it. Even if the programmers have forgotten the palette, they've remembered the sound chip – a great tune blasts out on all versions.** Gothik **contains a plethora of spells and weapons, which make the game very interesting to start with, although once used they fail to hold appeal for much longer. A decent enough game, but still at full price? "**

► Watch out! Here comes Olga



NICK

" Gothik **doesn't really hold anything new but there** *is* **some fun to be had here. The little sprites are quite well defined and the animation makes them look extremely cute. They move smoothly across the detailed backgrounds, but the way everything freezes while the screen scrolls isn't all that helpful. A scrolling system similar to the one in** Ikari Warriors **would have been much more fitting. On the colour side, the programmers could have been a bit more adventurous than just yellow backgrounds that change to blue at night, plus red blocks with black characters.** Gothik **is worth looking at but does get a bit boring after a while. "**

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: monochrome backdrops, with little variation of cute, but small, characters
Sound: mediocre spot effects with impressive tune
Options: choice of Olga (female) or Olaf (male)
General rating: the feeling was that we've had enough of this type of game

Presentation	60%
Graphics	55%
Playability	57%
Addictive qualities	54%
OVERALL	**56%**


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Another thirty days (give or take a few) have passed, and once again it's time for me to delve into another bulging mailbag. Microprose come under fire from a couple of conscientious objectors, and there are also more opinions on the new breed of 16-bit computers, and their apparent impending takeover. Captain Paranoia has never had it so good!

DON'T SELL OUT

Dear Lloyd
After reading the letters in CRASH I feel obliged, even if my views are insignificant, to write (well type) to you and voice my opinions on the state of the Spectrum and upgrading.

I (a mere 13 year old) have decided to upgrade this year and buy an Atari ST. So far I've saved half the money through hard work (delivering 400 papers a week isn't my idea of fun) and I hope to have saved the money up buy September.

£300 is a hell of a lot of money for anyone, let alone a schoolboy but I have set my eyes on that target. Many other people as you know are upgrading and this is where they make their big mistake – THEY SELL OUT!

Christ! It makes me mad. The amount of classified adverts selling Speccys is huge. And worse than that they're grossly underpriced, a common price being £50. The Spectrum is an excellent games machine and contrary to common belief, I think it has many more years to go. With 4 million Spectrums around, the software companies are continuing to produce software, and people are still buying the games. So as long as the public buy Spectrum games the companies will continue producing them. Simple isn't it?

With that thought in mind, when I purchase my ST I will hang on to my Spectrum and carry on buying software which is 10%-50% cheaper than 16-bit stuff.

Quite frankly I wish the press would stop being so negative about the Spectrum. Home computers are primarily for entertainment and that's what I get. True, you can get superior entertainment from a 16-bit computer but at a much superior price. Think about it.

I hope that you print my letter even if it just makes readers aware that the Spectrum has a long way to go yet.
Scott McNab, Edinburgh EH9 3AW

'Selling out', as you call it, is no Bad Thing. The purchaser of a second hand Spectrum obviously wants to use the computer, and will therefore go out and buy games, thus keeping the Spectrum games market active. Yes, the Spectrum has plenty of years in it yet – you don't need 16-bit graphics and sound to make a brilliant game! For your sensible comments, I've decided to award you this month's £40 software voucher.
LM

GUNSHIP'S ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES

Dear Lloyd
As an old fogey who has been reading CRASH for several years, I thought it was time I got up on my soapbox.

I was going to write in glowing praise of Microprose's *Gunship*, but on getting more deeply involved I came across some worrying aspects of the game.

After reading through the manual carefully, I loaded up and was soon zooming across the training ground with cannon blazing. 'At Last!' I thought. A real flying simulation. No childish arcade games for me. But closer inspection of the subsequent zones brought me up short. What was this? 82nd Airborne in Central America?

I wondered how many young people happily playing *Gunship* realise that the US involvement in Central America has been condemned as illegal by the world court at the Hague, and President Reagan's Contra arms deal contravenes not only several American laws, but the constitution of the United States itself.

'So what?' some of you may say. 'It's only a game.' But the point is that it's NOT a game. This is an accurate simulation based on a real incident which is still going on today.

Thousands of innocent people have been killed in Central America now because of terrorist action sponsored by the US Government.

Is it right to allow a computer 'game' to broadcast a subliminal message via a leisure medium? Such things are banned on British television.

The result of all this soul searching is that I've come to think maybe the mindless arcade games which are constantly condemned as harmful are in fact less harmful because they are mindless. Nobody cares if yellow aliens from planet Zeta, or evil Orcs are blasted into fragments.

The final message to remember is this: the greater the realism, the greater the responsibility needed.
Trevor Parrish, Walthamstow, London E17 9JJ

The fact that the US Army shouldn't be in South America is beside the point – they are, and this simulation, as you say, is 'real'.
LM

A FEW POINTS . . .

Dear Lloyd
A question. Has Peter Hoar from Essex got a brain? If he can tell me about a better Spectrum magazine than CRASH I shall be very surprised. Who has mentioned a constantly high standard of reviews, news, artwork and enjoyment over the last few years? Who has been first with interviews, reviews and features? Ask yourselves these questions and in each case the answer is CRASH. And he's complaining about the price! Doesn't he think any other Spectrum magazine will increase price? It just shows that CRASH has got the guts to lead the way as they have for the last few years in Spectrum computing.

You're telling me someone over the Christmas holiday has counted the number of advertisements. Has he nothing else to do? If he thought £1.95 is too much, then why did he buy it?

Another thing, why did he think the CRASH history was pointless because he had all the issues? Most people I know found the history both well written and interesting, as the first issues of CRASH are like gold-dust!

And he thinks *Match Day II* is just an upgrade of *Match Day*. He must be barmy! Why does he think *Match Day II* has just gone to Number 1 in the CRASH readers chart?

All I can say is that he must be stupid, and I'm sure lots of others share my views.
Mark J Taylor, Leigh, Lancs WN7 1NX

Yes, yes, yes.
LM

COMPUTER PROPAGANDA?

Dear Lloyd
I'm writing to complain about the anti-Russian bias in the products of Microprose. I own *Gunship*, which is the only game I have from this company, and have found the instruction booklet to be full of propaganda. Yet more recently I have been incensed by reading a review by *Stealth Fighter* in ZZAP! – a game which is soon to appear on the Spectrum. This 'game' is even more extreme than *Gunship*, and has the disaste to include missions over Libya and the Persian Gulf. In fact one ZZAP! reviewer even commented that the game was so topical that he felt we might see what he did, on the nine o'clock news that evening.

Seen from a purely 'playability' standpoint, both *Gunship* and *Stealth Fighter* are very good. Thus it seems likely that many people will buy these products, and Microprose's propaganda will receive inside coverage. Thus these products are more than just games, as their bias is so strong and widespread. Computer games, I firmly believe, should not contain such propaganda, and should certainly not try to make a game out of a current conflict, where people at this moment people may actually be being killed. This kind of program must be discouraged.

Digital Integration are an example of a company whose games contain no propaganda, and yet their games *Tomahawk and ATF* are on exactly the same subjects as *Gunship* and *Stealth Fighter* respectively. Clearly it is not necessary to simulate topical battles for a game of this type to be playable. The trend which Microprose is leading will only bring computer gaming into the midst of the political stage, and this is surely undersirable. I for one will not be buying *Stealth Fighter*, and hope others will soon join me.
Nigel Voak, Essex

It's so easy to get het up in this sort of situation. Personally I think that flying 'realistic' simulated missions over 'real' places helps bring your attention to the fact that this sort of thing could really happen. You can't just turn your back on the possibility of conflict in the Middle East in the hope that it'll go away. The sickening jingoism of the Microprose instruction manual, however, does tend to grate.
LM

ATTRIBUTE 'ASSLE

Dear Lloyd
I am writing to you for the first time. After several years of owning a Spectrum 128, I have always enjoyed the *On The Screen* as I like to do a bit of art myself. Only, there is one problem, I own an *AMX-mouse* and the *Artist II*. These two are both very good, but they both lack one thing: COLOUR. Before anyone corrects me, they do have colour but only to a pathetic standard. They put the colour in in big blocks, so circles become squares. So what I would like to know is am I using them correctly or not. Also what packages do the ▶



people use on the *On The Screen* to get the colour they do?

Thank you for reading my letter and hope you will be able to help me.

John Mather, Liverpool L14 0PQ

The 'problems' you're having are what every Spectrum owner has – attributes. The Spectrum computer can only accept two colours in every character space – every 8x8 pixel block. Consequently, when you try and put three colours into a block, one of them disappears and turns into the colour you're using, thus ruining the picture. Artists have to be very clever to get around these problems, and basically it means planning out your picture around character squares. Try looking at loading screens to get an idea of what you can or cannot do. It takes quite a lot of practise, but once you get the idea, you should be able to produce some brilliant pictures with the art packages you've already got.

LM

WOT? NO 128 GAMES?

Dear Lloyd

I am the proud owner of a Spectrum 128 and I think this is a great machine, but I am finding it very hard to buy 128K games to get the most out of my Speccy. The 128K was brought out to show people the difference in graphics and sound compared to the 48K, but what is the sense in buying a 128 or +3 if you cannot buy 128K software. Can you please tell me why it is so hard to find 128K games.

My second question is, if the new SAM computer (reviewed in last months *Tech Niche*) is going to be compatible with Spectrum 48K software, is there going to be much new software for it or will SAM owners have to make do with 48k software like us that own 128K machines?

I hope you write a reply for my questions as I am sure there are plenty of people who would like to know the answer. Keep up the good work there at the CRASH offices.

Robert Hanway, Dublin 14, Eire

Yes, apart from a few exceptions, Spectrum 128 only games are very scarce indeed. The reason for this is beyond me. There are plenty of 128s around, so why don't games manufacturers spend some extra time improving their programs to include extra features and screens? I should think SAM owners will be in exactly the same boat as you . . .

LM

NOT JUST A FAD

Dear Lloyd

First of all congratulations for 50 excellent issues. Ever since I started reading CRASH I have always found it to be the best magazine, standing head and shoulders above all it rivals. Everything about it is totally superior including your letters page, where at least you bother to answer the letters and don't print pure drivel like some mugs. However enough of this grovelling, and on to my point.

The main reason I have written is regarding the editorial article written by Barnaby Page. I don't really agree that the industry is in that bad a shape. It offers a great variety of entertainment and practical uses for the Home Computer owner, at what I consider a fair price.

I do agree however that the industry could do with more media coverage by the national press. It is definitely not a minority hobby and it is obviously not some craze that will fade shortly.

Myself and some friends have all written to various national and local papers asking why they don't feature a regular section on home computing, but they seem content to leave that sort of thing to people like yourselves and are not really interested.

It looks as if we will all have to stick with CRASH and to be totally honest that is just fine with me. By the way £1.25 is a bit expensive but I suppose its worth it for the value you get.

Matt Connolly, Hayes, Middlesex UB4 9LA

Computer sections in newspapers are on the increase these days, but what I really think is lacking is a television programme on computers. There's absolutely nothing around at the moment, which is very sad indeed. Perhaps other readers have views on this matter?

LM

ARIOLASOFT CLOSEDOWN: WAS IT THEIR FAULT?

Dear Lloyd

I read in the March CRASH about the closing down of Ariolasoft UK. In the report 'disappointing' sales were blamed. If you take a look at Ariolasoft's Summer '87 range you wouldn't be surprised – stuff like *Killer Ring* (47%), *Mountie Mick's Deathride* (47%), *Triaxos* (53%) and *Dogfight 2187* (56%). Perhaps if they'd been more choosy about what got released and compared them to other software releases they wouldn't have been in the position they're in now. Even Ocean got it together last year to bring us Smashes such as *Head Over Heels* and *Wizball*. Incidentally, I hear that Ocean plan to cut the amount of '88 releases to 2/3 of last years' in order to spend more time developing the games, which means a better standard of software.

Ariolasoft were capable of making great games (remember *Think!*, *Skyfox*, *Camelot Warriors*, *Deactivators* and *Terrors of Trantoss*? Although I admit these didn't seem to sell in great quantities – a wrong marketing mix perhaps?) The 'downfall' of Ariolasoft seems to have started at the beginning of 1987 when they stopped publishing in their own right and emerged with a fistful of labels (Starlight, Reaktor, 39 Steps, Viz Design and Magic Bytes – phew!)

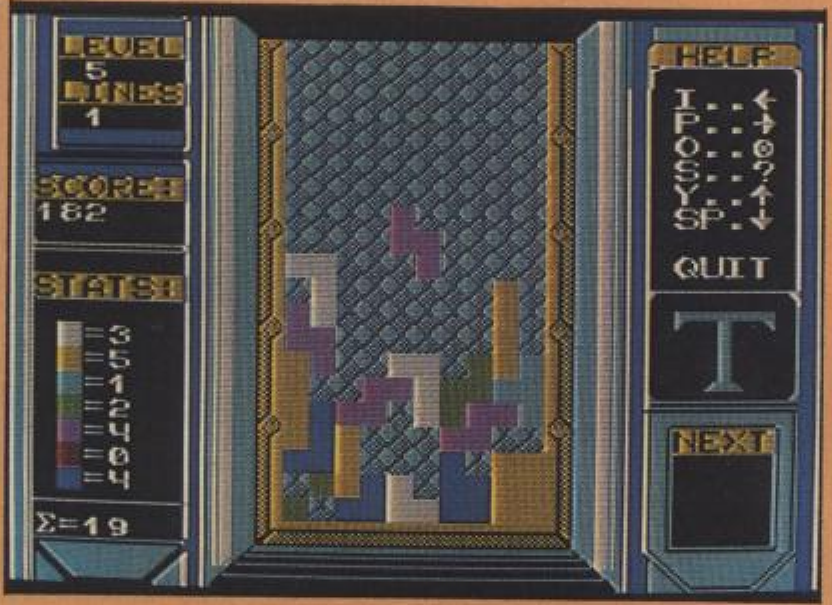
On a lighter note Magic Bytes is now being marketed by Gremlin Graphics – does this mean that they now have the rights to *Pink Panther* the game?

Tim Baker, Mid Glamorgan CF7 8DU

I'm sad to see Ariolasoft pull out of the UK, but I'm afraid in this industry it's survival of the fittest. Magic Bytes' Pink Panther *is soon*







to be available on the Gremlin label.

LM

MARKS AWRY?

Dear Lloyd
You did it with *Daley's Decathlon*. You did it with *Match Day*. You did it to *Arkanoid* and you've done it to *Tetris* (Issue 50). I'm talking, of course, about seriously underrating great games. How on earth did your reviewers have the gall to pen such phrases as 'poorly implemented' and 'becomes boring'?

True, *Tetris* is maybe not the most visually stunning of games on the Spectrum, but in a game like this looks don't count for anything. ZZAP! gibbered over the Commodore version (rightly so), yet I think that the Spectrum implementation is far better. In the type of game *Tetris* is, fancy programming and slick touches can often mar its playability. If you look at the Atari ST version, with its Psuedo-3D blocks and things, you'll see what I mean.

The *Tetris* review highlights many of CRASH's faults. The ratings are often too close together, seemingly being (consciously or not) fiddled to make them so. One of the comments was 'a fiendishly addictive game': yet it got only 79% for 'addictive qualities'! How? I have *ATF* as well, and although I think it's a great game, it doesn't even come close to *Tetris* in addictiveness, yet it gets 85%.

Of course, you'll probably pour out the standard reply, Lloyd, saying that the reviewers form their own opinions, and I say fine! But when the reviewers' opinions start varying too much from those of everyone else, it's time to get new reviewers. I say the last statement with some authority – I work in a computer shop, and I am certainly not alone in my adoration of *Tetris*.

I reckon you'll probably receive more than a few letters of complaint about the review, and I think you deserve it. Then again, if you print this letter, you will most probably be sent sackfuls of letters from babbling hordes screaming, 'Heretic! Heretic!'.

Summing up, I believe that CRASH has done too much laurel-resting, and has begun to take its readership for granted. If you continue to become less and less reliable as far as reviews go, then there are plenty of other magazines out there just waiting to net disillusioned CRASH readers. I have been buying CRASH ever since Issue 1, and for some time now I have been less satisfied with what was once a great magazine. For the moment, I will continue to buy CRASH to maintain my collection, and in the hope that you will give yourselves a big shake and raise up to your old, high, standards.

Ewan Dalton, Ayrshire KA12 0LJ

Well, Ewan, we've got a new set of deluxe reviewers, and have also dumped the individual ratings system, which served only to undermine the overall mark. Hopefully you'll find their marks more consistent and thoughtful. To be honest, I agree with you about Tetris *– it's a fabulous little game, and illustrates what I was talking about earlier. Who needs 16-bit graphics and sound?*

LM



IS THIS MAN SANE?

Dear Lloyd
I was once a fanatic of the highest degree. My life was dedicated to the golden tunes of *Manic Miner*, the glowing screens of *Jetpac*, *Halls of Things*, right through to *Elite*, *GAC* and the stunning sound effects of *Fist* (grunt grunt). Death stalked my very dreams, shadowy forms lurked in the depths of thought, occasionally appearing in a malignant burst of conscience, Ben Stone's face would lear out of my innermost sanctuaries of thought screaming 'You went and bought it, you prune, you even fell for the 'Commodore screens shown' and 'Some screens may vary' tricks', but still I went on. Many nights were spent awake in the acrid haze that always seemed to come from the power pack and smelled like burning socks, and sweating, shaking like a beast possessed as I tried to lose my thoughts in sleep, oh those horrific memories of the grating tunes of *Mr Wong's Loopy Laundry*.

Then came the fatal mistake that was to lead to near self destruction of mind numbing proportions, I . . . I . . . bought a Commodore. Only for a few brief months did this lapse, this justification of my place in Satan's toilet. Okay, I know that's very immature, but it did crash a lot and the games didn't quite hold it for me, I . . . LOOK! If you're going to start acting like that, you can jolly well . . . well you can stop starting to act like that right now, miladdo. Sorry, sorry, look this, these lapses hardly happen any each more. I'm really quite aa-AAARgurr fine bleurgh now, I mean what with the Commodore coming down in price two weeks after I bought one, and then . . . it's such a cruel, heartless, cold, rrrruthless computer. Oh my God, I'm mad aar-AaArnaAAgurrghh snarl (Okay, so Russ Abbott did it first, big fat hairy deal! Sorry, I just had to say that, *Garfield*'s my fave). But now, after many a dark month of loneliness and maturation (I SAID MATURATION!) I am ready to return to the world of funny shaped power packs and tapes that only work on my mate's machine, a new generation of computer kids who make me feel like getting out the Grecian 2000 (What do you mean you haven't got a bottle?)

Well, my Speccy's out an' ready for a blasting, if only I can get the damn thing out of the box aar-AARn-nn-narghgggh . . . on no, not the twitch aaah . . .

What can I say . . .
. . . agarhgnn . . .
. . . it's great to be back . . .
ugh!

Gus, Lockerbie, Dumfriesshire DG11 2JG

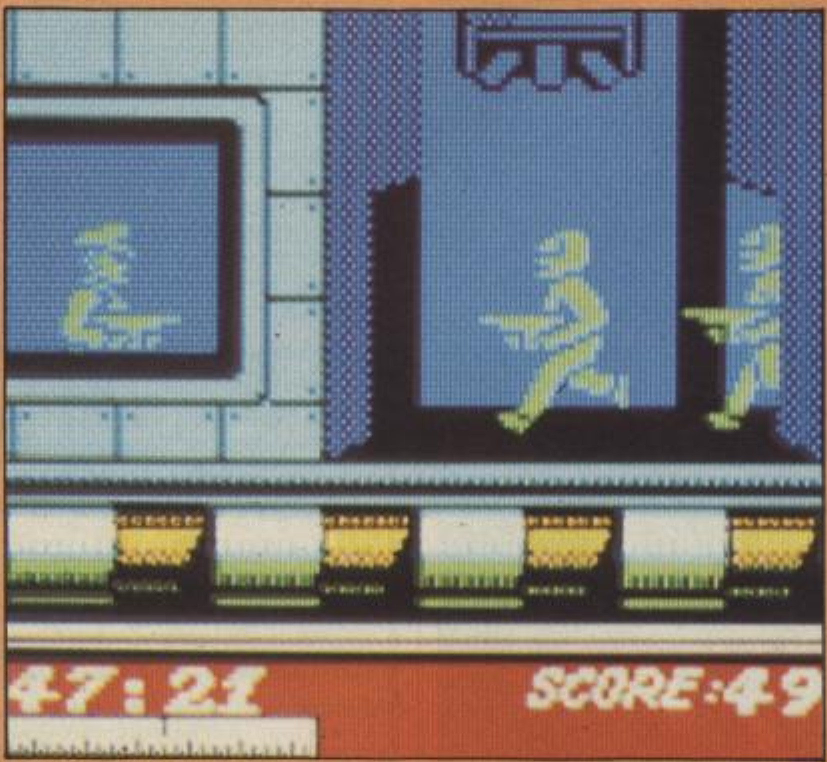
Don't worry Gus – the men in white coats are heading to Lockerbie this very minute.

LM

MORE MARKS AWRY

Dear Lloyd
I'd like to comment on your review of the computer game *Dan Dare II* (reviewed issue 49). I read CRASH regularly and have agreed with every review, give or take a few, until now.

Your review of *Dan Dare II* was the worst review you have ever written and I think your reviewers Nathan, Mike and Nick should be asked why they gave the game such a bad rating. In the review, Mike stated that if anything, it was worse than the original *Dan Dare*.



As far as I'm concerned, this is utter nonsense. The original *Dan Dare* is fun at first but it's too easy and can be completed after a few goes. *Dan Dare II*, however is much more compelling and totally addictive.

Also, in the overall comments box it said that the colour is distributed without thought. That could not be further from the truth. The colours have been mixed to create some excellent new colours and the shading is incredible. I agree that the white colour of the characters is not very good, but it avoids lots of bad colour clash and it's nicer than the green of the original Dan Dare game.

I also noticed that only Nick mentioned the sequence on the options page with the spaceship moving along. The spaceship itself is superbly drawn and the triple scroll of the stars behind it is excellent animation.

Dan Dare II improves on *Dan Dare* in every aspect of the game and I fail to see why it should get an overall rating of 74%, when you give trash like *Flying Shark* a rating of 85%. In my opinion, *Dan Dare II* deserves a rating of at least 90% and if it had been released earlier, it would have got my vote for the game of the year.

It irks me to have to write to you but I feel it was necessary to highlight this blatant miscarriage of justice shown by your review of the *Dan Dare II* game.

Jonathan Gyngell, Flitwick, Beds MK45 1LF

You said it yourself, 'in my opinion'. As the old adage goes, one man's meat is another man's poison – and when it comes down to reviewing, it's always a matter of personal opinion. I'm sure there's someone out there who thinks that Dan Dare II *was overrated!*

LM

ON THE 16-BIT FRONT

Dear Lloyd
I was already thinking about writing to you, when I saw your letters page in issue 50. That definitely made my mind up, and so I've put pen to paper (or finger to key) to write you these few lines. I'm not going to criticise Mr Hoar's letter (though he certainly deserved it), as you probably are already flooded with criticisms on the said letter.

Instead I'll be making a constructive criticism on your reply to Patrick Taylor's letter. I do think it takes a lot of courage to say that 16-bit machines are just 'minor disturbances', and compare them to desktop publishing. In my own, humble, opinion these machines are indeed a great step forward in entertainment software. There is one point you should have taken into consideration: the 16-bit machines are now on their *Horace goes Skiing* phase. What I mean is, programming techniques are far from achieving their best. Graphically, games won't get much better, but on the playability side, they will get much, much better and some great games will be possible only on these machines. It's obvious it'll take quite some time, but it will happen.

And where does this leave our good faithful Spectrum? Well, obviously in the darkest corners of consumer's households. But that doesn't mean it won't be worth keeping it for another couple of years (yes, that's all the time you've got left), because it is now a totally explored computer with some very playable games. This computer's decadence might even make software get better, as software houses won't be able to afford sales disasters.

What I really meant to remark was that I think you're cheating your readers. You really can't believe what you said, can you??? I don't want to be thought of as a traitor to our common cause. I saw Spectrum software grow with the passing of the years (mine has 5 years now), and I will see it die. And it will be worth every single second, at least to tell my grandsons what computers were like in my time. And the two years we've got ahead of us will also be worth it. It is a shame that everything must end, but on the other hand, better things may come ahead.

I hope I haven't hurt any feelings and I do believe there aren't many CRASH readers who want to believe in what I just said, but it is quite evident. Anyway, I will never sell my Spectrum, and I will always but CRASH as long as it lasts.

Bruno Taborda, Lisboa, Portugal

Of course, the 16-bit machines will eventually take over – what I mean is that it's not going to happen overnight as is often made out by the manufacturers and owners of these computers. The Spectrum has plenty of life in it yet, and I'm sure that there are many programmers out there ready to demonstrate that you can still teach an old dog new tricks.

LM

There goes another month, and another mailbag. If you have any comments on . . . anything really, write to LLOYD MANGRAM, CRASH FORUM, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE, SY8 1DB. You never know – if your letter is interesting, you could well see it in print. If you're REALLY lucky, you might even find a software voucher dropping onto your doormat.


VAMPIRE'S EMPIRE
GREMLIN
Atari ST
SPECTRUM £8.99 Tape
SPECTRUM +3 £12.99 Disk
CBM 64/128 £9.99 Tape £12.99 Disk
Atari ST
AMIGA £19.99 Disk
ATARI ST £19.99 Disk
AMSTRAD £9.99 Tape £14.99 Disk
MAGIC BYTES
Gremlin Graphics Software Ltd., Alpha House, 10 Carver Street, Sheffield S1 4FS. Tel: 0742 753423



A FISTFUL OF COIN-OPS

Following a recent visit to the 44th Amusement Trades Exhibition International Show at the Olympia in London, Steve Jarratt and Julian Rignall report on some of the newer coin-ops you're likely to find lurking in the corners of your favourite arcade . . .

WARDNER

Platform addicts are sure to like Taito's *Wardner*, a *Ghosts 'n' Goblins* clone.

The hero and his girlfriend are out for a stroll when all of a sudden, evil Wardner appears and spirits away the hero's betrothed. Anguished and generally peeved, the hero decides to set about rescuing his kidnapped lover. However, the road to Wardner's castle is a long and treacherous one, and involves crossing monster infested forests, swamps and lava pits.

Extra weapons and treasure are picked up along the way as the hero battles across the scrolling landscape, and there's a shop at the end of every level where treasure can be exchanged for useful items.

Although *Wardner* is devoid of originality, it's surprisingly playable and keeps you feeling for loose change.



► The hero comes unstuck in *Wardner*

► **The hero and heroine of *Wardner* are about to discover that you should *never* accept a lift from a stranger . . .**





SONIC BOOM

One of the simpler SEGA products to appear at the ATEI was Sonic Boom, a vertically scrolling shoot 'em up set over contemporary landscapes.

Taking control of a jet fighter, the objective is to fly into enemy territory and destroy a set target, starting with a large and heavily defended aircraft carrier.

The jet's armoury comprises of rapid-fire guns and a complement of three smart bombs (detonation of which is possibly the highlight of the whole game).

The opposition's hardware consists of mobile tanks, static gun emplacements and waves upon waves of aggressive aircraft. The resulting hail of fire is rather difficult to evade and destruction of the jet signals the reappearance of earlier screens which are negotiated once more.

Secondary armament is obtainable on contact with red and white parachutes which occasionally appear on destruction of enemy craft. A small fighter becomes 'attached' to the player's jet and thereafter acts as a second gun. Several fighters can be collected to create a small formation which fire in unison.

Loss of ships is reliant upon the precision of enemy fire: secondary ships may be picked off one by one, and a direct hit on the jet itself destroys the whole formation.

Sonic Boom's graphics are surprisingly bland for such a recent game, with uninteresting pastel landscapes and fairly standard sprites. Only the set targets have any real appeal, but the player doesn't really have that much time to admire the scenery while under the enormous amount of enemy flak!

The game plays very much like *Flying Shark*, and while offering some pretty hectic shoot 'em up action, doesn't offer anything that hasn't already been seen.

► **Level one of SEGA's difficult and rather bland shoot 'em up, *Sonic Boom***



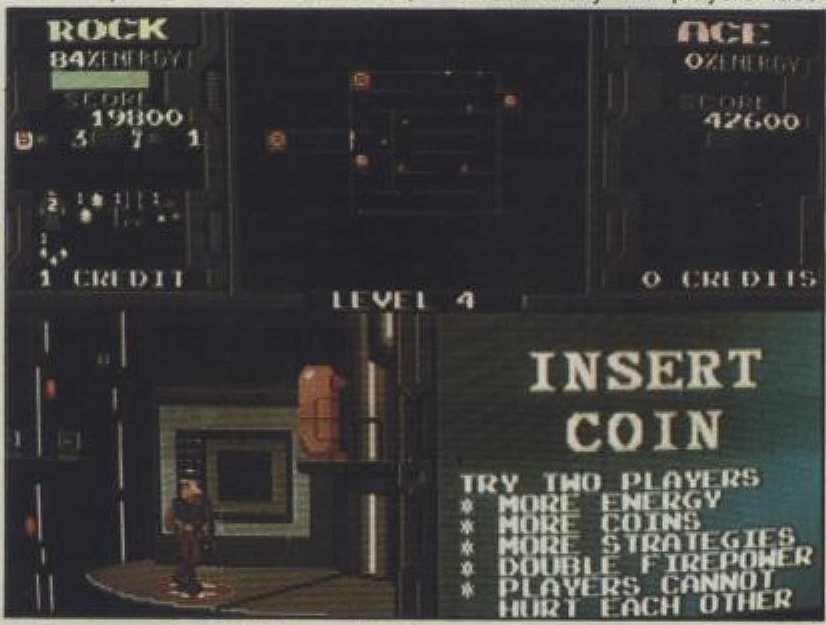
XYBOTS

Atari's *Xybots* is very much like a 3D *Bezerk*-cum-*Gauntlet* clone.

One or two players take control of Major Rock Hardy and Captain Ace Gun and blast their way through a series of 3D mazes, picking up extra weapons and goodies as they go. The action is displayed using split screens, with a status panel above each. Both viewpoint, so that players may look all around them. This is a very useful feature, since robots tend to leap out from side passages!

Coins are picked up along the way, and when the heroes exit from the maze by finding the elevator down to the next level, extra weapons and features can be bought, including extra shot power, extra shields, maze map, slow energy drain and robot map.

Occasionally the players face

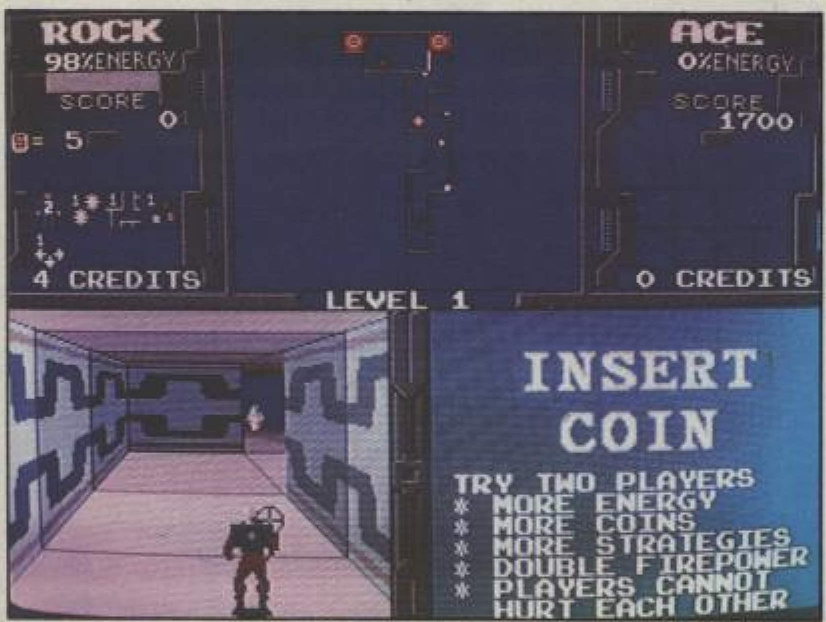


► Player one arrives at the supply centre

players run down the corridors, blasting any Xybot robots who dare show their metal faces, and dodging shots from the more aggressive droids.

The control method is quite unusual: as well as the back, forth and side-to-side movements, the joystick is also twisted to spin the the giant master Xybot in a one-on-one duel. Failure to beat him means the end of the game, while victory ensures progression.

Xybots provides plenty of challenge and fun, especially in two player mode, and the gameplay is different enough to keep you piling in the ten pences. Look out for it.



► *Xybots* offers some great robot-blasting action



THUNDER BLADE

SEGA, big name coin-op manufacturers whose previous games include *Space Harrier*, *Alien Syndrome*, *Out Run*, *Hang-On* and *After Burner* used the show as a platform to launch their latest video, *Thunder Blade*, a helicopter shoot 'em up. There are two versions of the machine: one which is sat upon and spins as the player flies the chopper, and another which fits inside a stand-up *Afterburner* cabinet.

The player takes control of the Thunder Blade and flies a mission through a series of increasingly hazardous landscapes. The action starts above a vertically scrolling city, and Thunder Blade flies above the tall buildings, which scroll past in convincing parallax fashion. The chopper is capable of flying 'in' and 'out' of the screen, which effectively increases and decreases the range of its guns.

After this stage the viewpoint changes to '*Afterburner*-style' 3D as the helicopter flies low through the city – which looks thoroughly convincing.

The action continues with alternate parallax scrolling and first-person 3D viewpoints as the mission progresses from the city over a sea, through a desert canyon, into a system of caves and across a forest.

The graphics are of a very high *Space Harrier* standard, and there's an excellent soundtrack, but although *Thunder Blade* is outstanding to look at and to listen to, it's playability is severely lacking. The control method is awful, and



► *Thunder Blade* turns vertical scroller as the chopper flies through canyons using some neat parallax effects



► The Thunder Blade plummets to Earth in a heap of twisted metal

trying to control the sit-down version with its three-foot long joystick is a complete and utter joke: the response is unbelievably sluggish, and as the gameplay is very, very unexciting, it only takes a couple of goes for boredom to set in. It's such a shame to see such brilliant graphics and sound being used to dress up a turkey like this.

If we've whetted your appetite for information on the latest arcade action, prepare to be bowled over by a FREE 16-page supplement in next month's CRASH. Packed with hints, tips and the lowdown on the summer's BIG arcade machines, you'd be mad to miss it!

SPRING SURPRISES

THERE'S always a fair splattering of compilations around, and never more so than in the Spring. Software houses finally realise that most of last year's games have come to the end of their lifespan in full price form, so they start to think . . . 'Why not make a few more quid out of a product by putting it out on a compilation?' It requires no more programming effort, little PR and has a long lifespan on the shelves of any retailer. All that's required is to pay off the programmers – either with a lump sum, or royalties (a percentage of each unit sold) – and organise the duplicating, which, when it comes to compilations, is troublesome at the best of times. Then finally there's the name to come up with. Not necessarily in that order though – remember *The Magnificent 7* (which is available free if you subscribe to CRASH this issue) with eight games!

Are these Great Games, as with Gremlin, or All-Stars, as in The Edge's case? Or perhaps they're just a Top Collection from Elite or could they be from an arcade, as with both US Gold's releases this month. Whatever you call the anthology of amazing accomplishments (even *Bogie's Pick* from Top Ten Software sounds interesting) it's bound to appeal to the average street buyer. All those games for just X amounts of pounds, it sounds too good to be true. Be warned, though, most of the time it is – especially with cheap compilations. Take a good look at the versions of the games that you're getting – is that *International Karate* or *IK+*? Are you buying the best version of *Uridium* around? There's also a + version of *Uridium*! Are you going for a compendium of past blasters (like *Four Smash Hits* from Hewson), or some recent games (as in Ocean's *We Are The Champions*)? Or perhaps even a mixture, like The Edge's Easter offering, *All-Stars* (from the four year old *Brian Bloodaxe* to the four-month-old *Inside Outing*)? Be careful, and don't be totally convinced by voluminous packaging – it looks nice, but can be a real pain to store.

ELITE HIT HARD

Elite, who have been relatively quiet on the game front this year, currently have two compilations in the market place under the Hit Pak label. *Top Ten Collection* has been out for a while now, but it's still worth a mention – if only for the chocolate box that the four cassettes come in. Only a pound a game doesn't seem like bad value for money. After all you can play all your (very) old favourites like *Airwolf* (a CRASH Smash) and both the *Saboteur* games. The attractive *Critical Mass* is also in there alongside *Thanatos*, which is graphically impressive at first but lacks any compulsive gameplay.

If that's not enough of Elite games you can also get *Volume 3* of the *6-Pak*. Unless they bring out some more games soon they'll be hard pushed to produce a fourth volume! Anyway this month's super six from Elite include some real classics – and some real clangers. Let's get *The Living Daylights* out of the way first – it figured as one of the worst games of 1987. On the good side there's the tremendously playable *Ghost 'n' Goblins* and *Paperboy*. You also get both of the *Dragon's Lair* games – although *Escape From Singe's Castle* is the only one worth bothering with. Finally, we have *Enduro Racer* – one of the best race games of 1987.

Elite aren't the only ones out with ten games for a tenner. **Gremlin Graphics** are currently pushing the second in their *10 Great Games* series. Arcade adventurers are well catered for with *Auf Wiedersehen Monty* (voted Best Arcade Adventure 1987 by CRASH readers) *Thing Bounces Back* (before even appearing on the Spectrum – only the sequel was released) and *Jack The Nipper II In Coconut Capers* (a CRASH smash back in Issue 46). Cartoon fans can't complain at the inclusion of *Basil The Great Mouse Detective* or even at *Mask*. Beat 'em up fans are also pampered with *Death Wish III* and *Samurai Trilogy*. Then, finally, we have the now obligatory 'previously unreleased game'. Is *The Duct* too good to release on its own? Or is it just not worth bothering with?

CHAMPIONSHIP SPRINT

Ocean's proud boast this month is that *We Are The Champions* (well they did gain your award for Best Software House 1987, so what do you expect?). I'm a bit confused, though. If Ocean are the champions then how come they only produced one (and that under their Imagine label) of the five games on their compilation of the same name . . . But don't say anything or you'll probably get beaten up, judging by the contents of *We Are The Champions*. The fabulous *Renegade* (whose sequel, *Target Renegade*, is reviewed elsewhere in this issue) appears alongside *IK+* (that's the new version, which we smashed in the Christmas Issue) and the controversial *Barbarian* (like *Renegade*, probably, also underrated). If that's not enough beat 'em up violence for you there's also *Rampage*, an arcade tie-in that, like its companion *Super Sprint*, sold surprisingly well. It may average at two pounds a game, but at least we can all remember what they're all about!

You may have seen the CRASH Smash, *Gauntlet*, bundled in a Limited Edition with *Gauntlet II* for £9.99. But don't forget that it's also available on **US Gold**'s *Arcade Force Four* collection, alongside two other Atari coin-op conversions, *Road Runner* and *Indiana Jones And The Temple Of Doom*. You'll also get Namco's *Metrocross* for the £9.99 asking price. All the games have initial appeal but the games are generally on the boring and repetitive side.

Again on the arcade tie-in front, and also from US Gold comes *Data East's Arcade Alley* – although this isn't quite as impressive. Only *Kung-Fu Master*, with 56%, gained over half a century in CRASH. It makes you wonder if any Data East conversions will work on the Spectrum.

One good thing about a company producing many games for the Spectrum is that when it comes to compilation time (it hits all of us eventually, the thought of something for almost nothing is too good to be true) they have a wide choice of products. **Softek International** are one such company. Now, with almost more labels than Debenhams, they've chosen to release their next succulent selection under the banner of The Edge. Their last compilation was supposedly a Collectors' Edition but this one should appeal to Softek fans even more – you can almost track the life of the Spectrum with it. From way back in '84 come *Psytraxx* and *Starbike*. 1985 brings us such memorable games as *Brian Bloodaxe* and *That's The Spirit*. 1986 was a very good year if I remember correctly – we had *Bobby Bearing* (which would still do tremendously well nowadays) and *Mindstone*, a credible adventure. And who could forget 1987 with such delights as *Inside Outing* and *Xecutor*. They're all here – good and bad, old and new – and for only £8.99 it's got to be worth it!

NOW WHAT?

Virgin Games's *Now Games* series enters its fifth episode next month. *Now Games 5* also contains a good mix of games, old and new. The ageing *International Karate* (that's NOT the version in Issue 49) joins the likes of the riotous *Street Hassle*, fun-filled *Kat Trap* and *Prohibition*. For those who require more stimulation than blasting the heads off a couple of liquor-swilling punks then try *Hacker II* and *Rebel* – both are superbly puzzling games.

I spy with my little eye three great games from **Databyte**. Yes, the people that brought you the CRASH Smash, *Spy Vs Spy*, and The Island Caper have finally decided to release the third game in the series, *Artic Antics*, in a special *Spy Vs Spy Trilogy* pack. All fans of the MAD magazine characters should immediately proceed to the nearest software outlet and purchase a copy – even at £9.99 (£14.95 disk) it's super value and unbelievable fun. All games are one or two player and feature Simulvision (a constant split screen display which displays you and your opponent – computer or human) allowing you to keep an eye on what your opponent is scheming.

Also in trilogy form is *Time & Magick* from newly-formed **Mandarin Software**. This time you get three Level 9 adventures: *Lords Of Time*, which is older than time itself (well, almost), *Red Moon* a cover Smash from Issue 20 and *The Price Of Magick*, also a Smash. £14.95 on cassette AND disk (strange, but true).

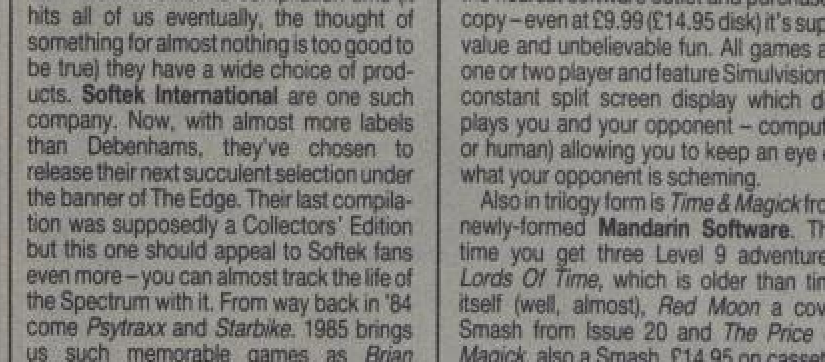
Budget compilations have never been impressive; some things never change. You'll now be able to get *Four Great Games Volume 3* (no relation to *Ten Great Games*) from Tynesoft's **Microvalue** range. Nice to see *Equinox* on there – it was Raffaele Cecco's first game, before *Exolon* and *Cybernoid* – one for his fans only. Finally, **Top Ten Software** have *Bogie's Pick 1* and *4* for your delectation. Bogie's first pick is pretty good, with *Herbert's Dummy Run* and *Black Hawk* (both very old Smashes). But with the fourth I'm afraid Bogie's lost his touch. However, both are only £2.99.

CRASH Overall percentage and review issue numbers are given after each game. N/R denotes 'not reviewed'.

TOP TEN COLLECTION

Hit-Pak

Saboteur	93% 24
Saboteur II	83% 41
Sigma 7	62% 39
Critical Mass	90% 23
Airwolf	90% 13
Deep Strike	79% 36
Combat Lynx	88% 10
Turbo Esprit	88% 28
Thanatos	93% 35
Bomb Jack II	71% 39



cassette £9.99 +3 disk £11.99



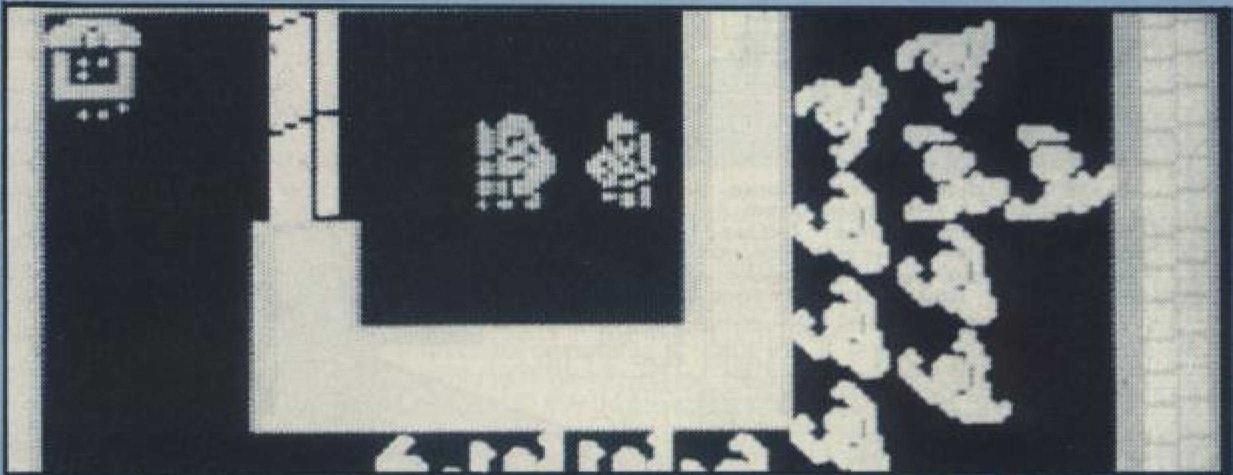
10 GREAT GAMES II

Gremlin Graphics

The Duct	N/R
Mask	81% 45
Auf Wiedersehen Monty	85% 40
Samurai Trilogy	49% 45
Convoy Raider	56% 43
Jack The Nipper II In Coconut Capers	87% 46
Basil The Great Mouse Detective	73% 47
Death Wish III	45% 45
Thing Bounces Back	85% 42
The Final Matrix	75% 41

cassette £9.99
+3 disk £14.99





WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS

Ocean

IK+	91% 49
Renegade	89% 44
Rampage	69% 49
Barbarian	85% 41
Super Sprint	58% 46

cassette £9.95

ARCADE FORCE FOUR

US Gold

Gauntlet	92% 37
Road Runner	73% 43
Metrocross	77% 42
Indiana Jones And The Temple Of Doom	65% 46

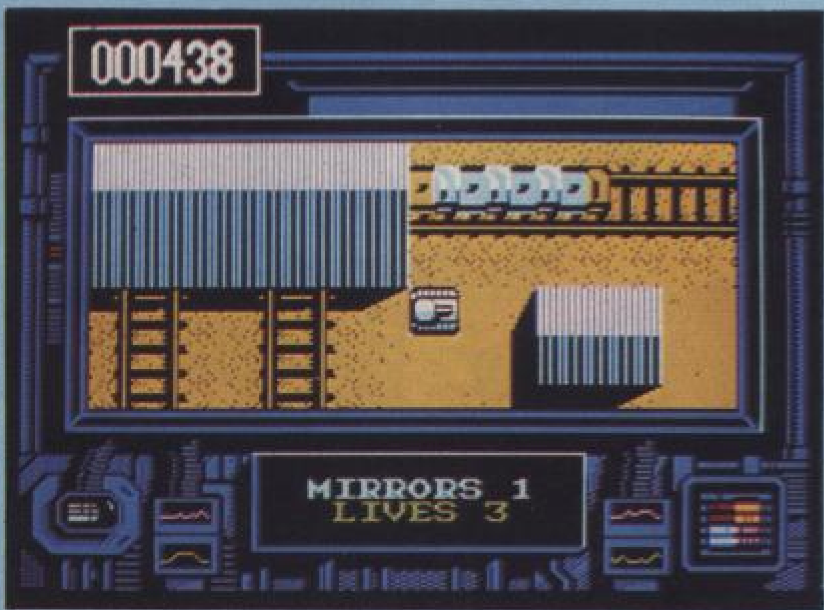
cassette £9.99

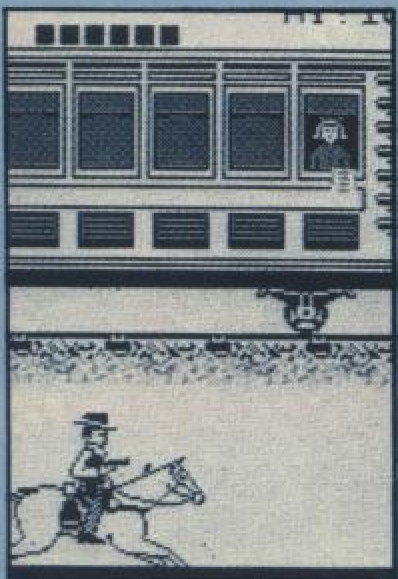
DATA EAST'S ARCADE ALLEY

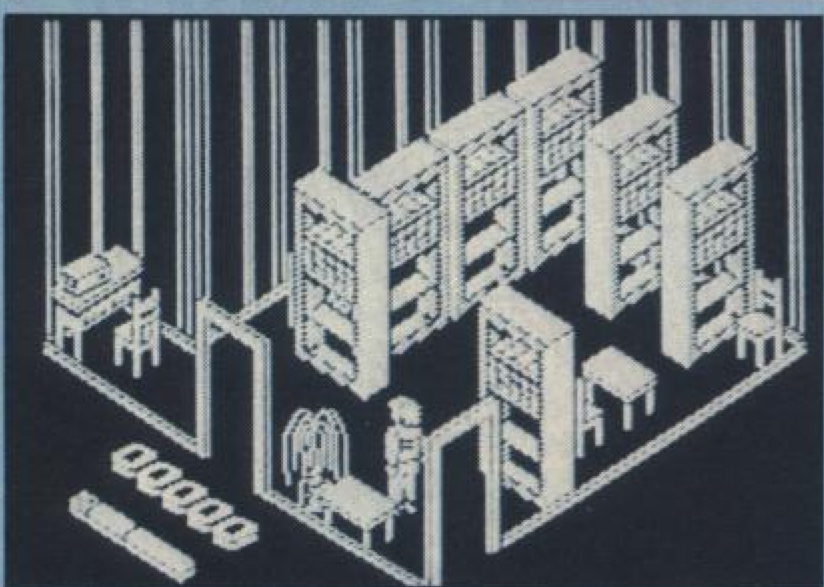
US Gold

Kung Fu Master	56% 31
Breakthru	43% 36
Express Raider	47% 41
Last Mission	48% 44

cassette £6.99
+3 disk £12.99







ALL-STARS

The Edge

Xecutor	84% 45
Inside Outing	82% 49
Bobby Bearing	94% 31
Shadow Skimmer	62 39
Mindstone	89% 33
Warlock	N/R
Psytraxx	69% 10
Brian Bloodaxe	86% 14
That's The Spirit	82% 20
Starbike	77% 10

cassette £8.99

TIME & MAGICK

Mandarin Software

Lords Of Time	03
Red Moon	9/10 20
The Price Of Magick	94% 30

cassette or +3 disk £14.95



FOUR GREAT GAMES VOLUME 3

Microvalue

Equinox	87% 30
Ku-Ku	N/R
Cop-Out	65% 37
Ian Botham's Test Match	N/R

cassette £3.99

NOW GAMES 5

Virgin Games

International Karate	68% 24
Prohibition	59% 43
Street Hassle	75% 49
Kat Trap	84% 36
Hacker II	82% 37
Rebel	76% 44

cassette £9.95

BOGIE'S PICK 1

Top Ten Software

Herbert's Dummy Run	90% 18
Little Al	N/R
Tarantula	N/R
Black Hawk	92% 08

cassette £2.99

BOGIE'S PICK 4

Druids Moon	**N/R**
Metaldrone	N/R
Smudge & The Moonies	N/R
Desert Burner	46% 20

cassette £2.99

SPY VS SPY TRILOGY

Databyte

Spy Vs Spy	93% 19
The Island Caper	53% 41
Artic Antics	N/R

cassette £9.95
+3 disk £14.95

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ADVENTURE TRAIL

with Samara



Due to popular demand and a sudden influx of cassettes, home-grown software is back. This month's offerings were particularly impressive – if you think you can match their standard don't hesitate to send in your own. I promise to look at them all, though I can't guarantee a review. As long as you enclose the relevant postage and packing, however, I'll make sure they're returned . . .

MONSTER

Haggisoft, £3.99
Author: David Haggarty

Professor Pointer, originator of the time gate theory, is spurned and ridiculed by his learned colleagues. Undaunted, he constructs the machine on his own and in one last ditch attempt to save his reputation, activates the final switch. There is a blinding flash and the professor finds himself in the middle of a stone circle in the unfamiliar territory of myth and legend. Triumph quickly gives way to terror as he discovers the machine didn't travel through time with him and his reputation is never going to be made unless he finds a way back.

Wandering through the landscape of swamps, desert, caves and citadels he comes across a series of characters – mostly friendly – who gladly give advice when asked for help. Gordo Greatbelly, renowned proprietor of the Dancing Ogre Inn, is the most comprehensive source of free advice although others, for example Boot the giggling elfin alchemist, can give more specialised help. Contact with the friendly but initially powerless wizard of Tudaw who gives the professor a series of tasks to complete, is vital. He explains that the ruling class is troubled; the princess Olga has disappeared and King Gruff has lost his son Prince Grott. The professor's task, quite simply, is to restore order and return enough power to the wizard to send him home.

An unusual and very enjoyable element is the close interaction of text and graphics. Every location has its own colourful and detailed illustration and shows doors opening, rocks moving and people leaving as you type in the corresponding command. Execution of a magic spell causes the background to flash in a quick succession of rainbow colours.

In locations where no definite exits are given, the image of a distant citadel or temple urges the professor to persevere. On one notable occasion a very important object is depicted graphically but not described in the text. As it was the only such instance, I spent a lot of time trying to use other clearly visible items in vain. Nevertheless it's one example of how graphics can and do enhance the value of the text.

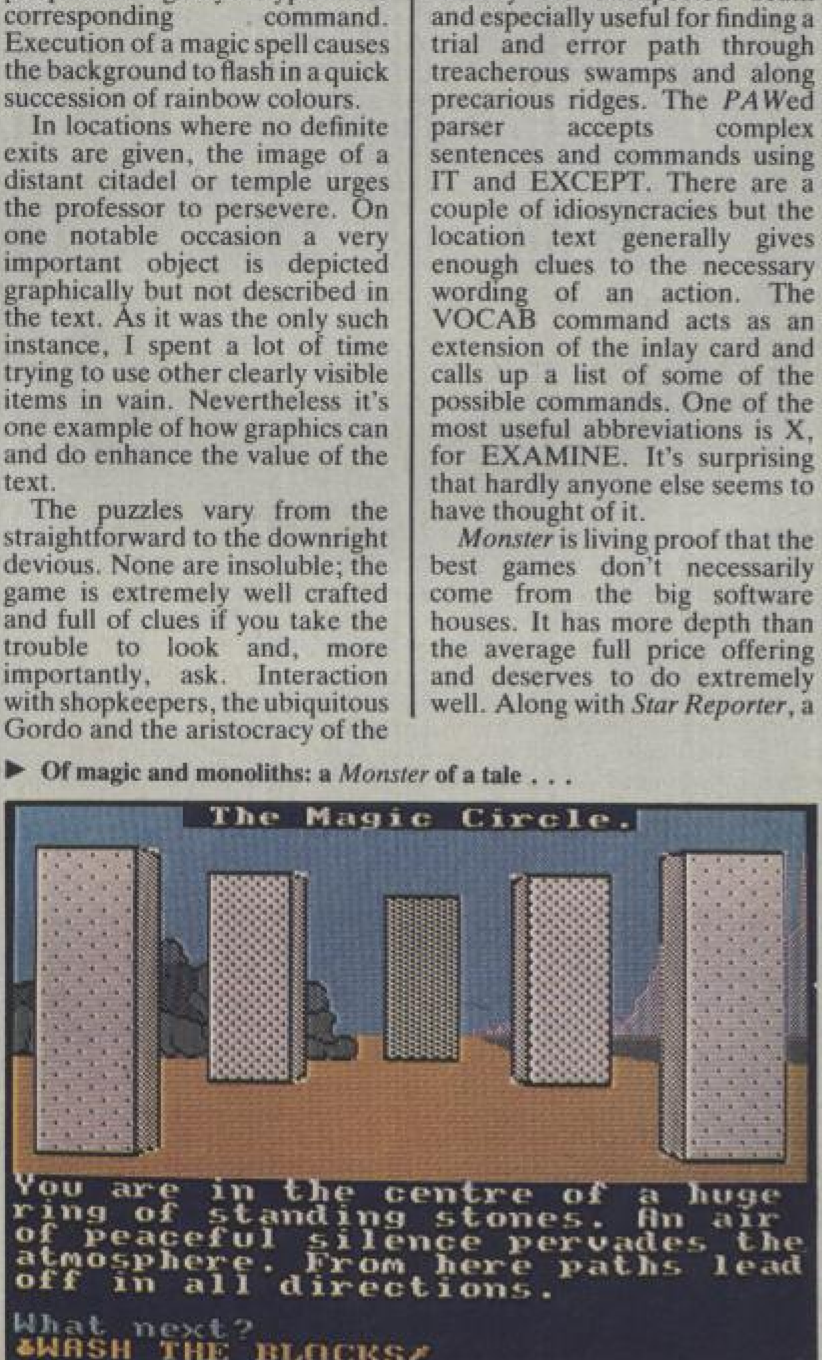
The puzzles vary from the straightforward to the downright devious. None are insoluble; the game is extremely well crafted and full of clues if you take the trouble to look and, more importantly, ask. Interaction with shopkeepers, the ubiquitous Gordo and the aristocracy of the enchanted land is essential. Success depends on a very realistic mix of honesty and deception; excessive greed for treasure meets with its just rewards, although a little trickery in the Dancing Ogre won't go amiss.

Sudden death, indicated by a humorous and colourful end-of-game screen, is a pervasive, if not constant, possibility. In most cases ample warning is given, although on one or two occasions working out the precise wording to get out of a situation needs more turns than the program allows.

Fortunately there is a RAMSAVE option, an excellent remedy for unexpected death and especially useful for finding a trial and error path through treacherous swamps and along precarious ridges. The *PAWed* parser accepts complex sentences and commands using IT and EXCEPT. There are a couple of idiosyncracies but the location text generally gives enough clues to the necessary wording of an action. The VOCAB command acts as an extension of the inlay card and calls up a list of some of the possible commands. One of the most useful abbreviations is X, for EXAMINE. It's surprising that hardly anyone else seems to have thought of it.

Monster is living proof that the best games don't necessarily come from the big software houses. It has more depth than the average full price offering and deserves to do extremely well. Along with *Star Reporter*, a

► **Of magic and monoliths: a *Monster* of a tale . . .**



►

bonus 48K adventure with sound effects, *Monster* is available for £3.99 (including postage and packaging) from: Haggisoft, *3D Sherwood Road, Hurlford, Kilmarnock, Ayrshire KA1 5DW.*

OVERALL 84%

CLOUD 99

Marlin Games, £2.95
Author: Linda Wright

It's the middle of the night and a strange light is coming through the window; a mysterious voice is calling your name. One of the weirdest adventures suburbia has ever encountered is about to begin. Jack Frost has been messing up the weather and you've got to put everything right before dawn.

Linda Wright's latest adventure (two have been published by Incentive already) comes in two versions. The 48K adventure is text only while the 128K version has graphics, more detailed location descriptions and one or two extra commands.

The weather quest begins in the comparative comfort of your own home. Like all the best homes, it's in a terrible mess, and the text does its best to bring you all the gory details; there's 'junk littering your desk and covering the floor', and as you stumble into the kitchen, rubbing the sleep from your eyes, you notice 'crockery that's piled in the sink and on the units, as well as the sticky finger marks which cover the cupboard and taps'. Further exploration leads you to the weather city of Cloud 99 (it's outside your front door, of course), with three levels of sabotaged weather halls and all the trappings (including theatre and tourist office) of a wealthy tourist town.

The 128K version has different graphics for every location from hen house to art gallery, theatre to barn. The small, clearly defined pictures, which take up about a quarter of the screen, don't contribute a tremendous amount to the light-hearted atmosphere conjured up by descriptions. Still, with opening doors and running water, they're an added bonus.

The havoc Jack has created in the weather halls is rather like the disorder in your own home. A fire is melting the ice hall, the rain dispenser is blocked up and the thunder machines have lost their drumsticks. Initially the player has limited resources; judicious interaction with some of the city's characters, who respond in various ways to pleas for help, are necessary. In most cases they'll help you if you help them; it's just a matter of working out what an American tourist, a crestfallen angel, or an anxious baker want most in the world.



► A taste of the home comforts before the frost bites . . .

The puzzles are light-hearted and logical: common sense generally provides the answer, although in one or two cases some extra lateral thinking may be required. Linguistic jokes should not be overlooked. Only some solutions are interdependent, with the advantage that getting stuck on one area of the game doesn't necessarily bring progress to a complete and grinding halt. As you restore order in each of the halls a congratulatory message flashes up to commemorate your success; it's very satisfying to get a pat on the back early on in the game.

All these user-friendly features make *Cloud 99* an ideal adventure for beginners, although experienced adventurers shouldn't be put off. Some of the problems require alert, logical thinking and the time limit (the clock ticks away even between turns) gives the challenge that extra edge.

The game, which was written using Gilsoft's *PAW*, accepts fairly long, complex sentences. It may take a little time to discover the necessary wording to carry out a particular action but usually there are strong hints in the descriptive text. Additional commands include RAMSAVE and SAVE and, in the 128K version only, HELP and PAUSE. The latter stops the game temporarily should you want to make a cup of tea or get on with something else.

Cloud 99 is another example of the high quality home-grown software that can be produced using a facility like the *PAW*. It's not one of the toughest adventures around but the humorous tone and the ingenuity of the puzzles make it one of the more enjoyable to play. At £2.95 for both versions, you can't lose. Marlin Games can be contacted at: *19 Briar Close, Nailsea, Bristol BS19 1QG.*

OVERALL 75%

COUNTDOWN TO DOOM

Topologika, £9.95 disk only

Topologika, the Peterborough software house, prides itself on producing British adventure games. *Countdown to Doom*, a text-only adventure which was first released by Acornsoft, could hardly be set further away from the land of Stilton and budding British businesses . . .

Travelling through space on a routine mission you're in orbit around the long-deserted planet of Doom, blissfully unaware of its efficient automatic defence system. Moments later your craft crashlands on the inhospitable planet surface. Shaken, but otherwise unhurt, you examine the wreckage and realise that unless you can locate the necessary parts, collecting as much bonus treasure as you can in the process, your ship will corrode away in a mere 400 time units.

At close quarters the planet looks even more forbidding than it did from the sky. Its hostile terrain is characterised by extreme changes of climate; murky swamps border leafy jungles, mountain paths lead up to icy glaciers and down into the exhausting heat of a sandy, disorientating desert. The locations are extensive, atmospherically described and, for the most part, extremely **hazardous. Striding boldly into the unknown is likely to lead to an early death at the hands of the planet's exotic creatures. Slugs,** allodiles, electrically charged blobs, hungry metatermites and rampaging decapods would be easy to avoid if only you knew where they lived . . . As there's no RAMSAVE option, saving to disk is essential.

A large part of the extensive environment is immediately accessible so success depends much more on wandering around and discovering what you have to do than performing a series of specified tasks. Topologika describes the difficulty level as standard; I would venture to say that beginners would find some of the problems, which aren't always logical, harder than that to solve. Timing is of the essence, false moves early on can cripple progress later and no clues, however cryptic, should be ignored. You may find yourself succumbing to the on-line help system (which is very careful not to give too much away) more often than usual.

The process is made all the tougher by the absence of an EXAMINE command; most Topologika games assume that you take in everything at first glance. This is more realistic than a laborious search for something you are more than capable of seeing, but it also means that it's impossible to hide clues to the use of a particular object in its description. In some cases, notably a rod which can only be used once, you have to activate the object to find out what it does, then start again to make proper use of it.

£9.95 buys you a fairly complex parser which comprehends most complex commands. It is rather choosy, however, about the precise input needed to complete certain actions. This is one area in which the hint system could be more helpful. The wording of a hint itself doesn't always correspond with the phrase the program will accept. I still haven't worked out how to pick up an object with a fishing net. The obvious commands GET X WITH NET and CATCH X WITH NET have no visible effect.

Still, these aren't typical hiccups and the obvious complexity of *Countdown to Doom* makes up for the occasional limitations of the parser. Certainly, if you enjoy the sort of game which involves hours of careful exploration, Peter Kilworth has added enough puzzles, hidden pitfalls and encrypted conundrums to make the long and hazardous journey more than just worthwhile. To begin the countdown contact Topologika at *FREEPOST, PO Box 39, Stilton, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire PE7 3BR*

OVERALL 85%

SIGN STUMPS

THE PAWN

'I have amassed 205 points and have reached a halt' writes SIMON GOODCHILD from Harlow in Essex.

To kill Kronos try using the thermonuclear device.

THE HOBBIT

DAVID LLOYD writes to ask:
1 How do you avoid the pale bulbous eyes in the forest?
2 How do you float down the river in the barrel without getting swept against the portcullis?

1 Move once in the direction that you moved prior to meeting the eyes. For instance, if you had just moved west when the eyes appeared, then move west again. Wait two turns and move twice in the same direction. There are other ways of coping with this but this solution should work.
2 Get off the barrel when you reach the Long Lake.

THE HELM

TONY GRIST is tearing his hair out again in his attempts to enter the fortress. How can he avoid premature baldness?

Drop the stones on the river bank to form stepping stones north. Find the spectacles to burn the haystack and use the needle found there (where else?) to pick the lock.

THE BIG SLEAZE

Yet more problems with this New York adventure are being encountered by S ENGLISH who wants to know how to open the medicine cabinet (you don't need to) and what to do with the 200W flashlight.

Use the flashlight in 21st Street to explore what lies behind the grille. Don't forget to take the battery with you (courtesy of I JONES).

RIGEL'S REVENGE

KEV and PETE from RAF St Eval in Cornwall, PAUL BUSCOW from Liverpool and BARRY SWINSCOE from Plymouth are just some of the many people hopelessly stuck in Smartegg Software's excellent adventure. Hints regarding the most frequently asked questions follow:

1 In the hotel untie the wire and push the bed twice to find the gun. (Always carry the gun for protection in Suburbia.)
2 To get out of the basement flat pull the bar firmly, then push it hard.
3 Don't get lost in the desert. FOLLOW TRACKS from the location of the bone.
4 To get the screwdriver, climb a lamp post and continue east.
5 To avoid getting caught at the porch THROW RUBBLE AT LIGHT and then keep moving.
Whatever you do, don't get caught in the net – it's the end of the game.

NEVER-ENDING STORY

ROBIN CHAMBERS wants to know what the leather is for and how to get out of part 1.

Use the leather to carry the broken glass from the smashed box. Get Falkor to help you cross the desert and go south when you reach the sphinx.

NORMAN POWELL from Edmonton isn't stuck on anything specific – he just wants a few hints for part 2.

1 Don't get too close to the Nothing and don't go east from the church unless you're carrying the Glowglobe.
2 In the ruined building REMOVE PLANKS to reveal the stairway.
3 Carry the Glowglobe when you go underground (once there you can just drop it).
4 CUT WEB when carrying small knife.

Forgotten to take a rowing implement up the creek? Send your tips and queries on adventures old and new to SAMARA'S SIGNSTUMPS, CRASH, *PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 1DB.*

The most interesting are published but I'm afraid that personal replies aren't possible.

GET INTO CRIME!

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LOADSA MONEY

PAUL EVANS forgoes the SHADES article (yet again) to take a stroll round Telemap's Hotel California

ANOTHER MONTH, another exam to worry about. That's the way it's going down here.

Group (Micronet's parent company), have been very busy improving its service to the humble modem user in and out of Micronet. The results? Well . . .

Oh dear, oh dear! Have Telemap inherited Loadsa Money's fortune? If they have then they're certainly having a good go at losing it! I'm referring to their new database, *Hotel California*. It's one of the first to start using the dreaded 0898 numbers. You've probably seen these numbers in the papers, or even The Sun! They connect you to normally taped messages from 'Sexy Sarah and her Wild Ferrets', badly recorded chart music or chatlines, including the now expired *Talkabout*. These numbers are leased by British Telecom and they pay the owner some of the money gained for each call. Of course, for both parties to make a decent profit, the calls are very expensive. They cost 38p a minute between 8am and 6pm during a weekday or 25p a minute any other time. It doesn't need much mathematical knowledge to realise that you would need a very flexible bank account to cope with that! *Talkabout* was closed after reports came in of teenagers running up bills of £500 or more! However, despite all of this, Telemap have joined another company, Denise, in opening viewdata databases on the 0898 numbers. As I have no information on Denise, I'm taking a look at *Hotel California*.

Hotel California has been designed around (surprise, surprise) a hotel. The database has not been written with computer buffs in mind, but is meant to appeal to a wider audience of public. At the time of writing it hardly compares with Prestel or Micronet for size, but promises that it will expand. The hotel is divided into eight sections, plus a reception area that provides a guide to what is new and how to use the service. All areas are accessible via a hotel elevator; I'll take a look at them all.

RENDEZVOUS: This area you could call a dating agency! It's a database containing names of people who want to meet with others. You can add your own name to the list or look at the others available. At this time it's quite small; I spotted one entry!

CASINO: Here's an area for all you quiz-masters. In real terms it comes nowhere near a real casino: it's just a collection of games that you can play for cash prizes or fun! Most of the games are quizzes and very hard ones too. The roulette is a weekly set of questions that had me stumped from the first one! However, the prizes are quite generous and this particular one was worth £25.

SHOPS: This section has two 'shops': the newsagents and the Kays catalogue shop. The newsagents is a classified ads section where you can read adverts from other users for anything they want to buy, sell or say. If you want, you can add your own advert which will remain for three working days on the system.

Kays has a database containing the details of every product they sell. You can search for an article by stating what product, make and cash limit you have, or just browse and examine the special offers. You can order a catalogue or, if you spot something you like, exercise your plastic and buy it! Kays are offering the chance of winning a personal stereo with every first purchase. The flaw that occurs to me is that if you already have a catalogue, then you can phone Kays direct and save money on your bill.

CAFE SOCIETY: There's not much to say about this. It's just a normal Micronet-style chatline for people with nothing better to do. It's similar to *Quickchat* but it also has a database of previous messages to look through. There's no privacy so your messages are revealed to all watching. It's a bit slow and boring – as is the case with most chatlines.

CONFERENCE SUITE: This is just a gateway to *Teletalk*. You can create your own persona but if you go and try using on your own account, it won't work. See last month's issue for a review of *Teletalk*, and an update later on.

NIGHT PORTER: I was expecting this section. It's a database of horoscopes and a problem page. You can read the horoscopes or the various problems and if you have one, send your own! Can't really decide why they called it the *Night Porter* though.

TRAVEL: This was the area that impressed me the most. It's a massive collection of information on 157 countries and an amazing 35,000 hotels. The database gives information on what each hotel provides and flights to and from it. You can, for example, find out if there's a Ludlow hotel with 35 room conference centre, luxury penthouse, 500 rooms all with colour TV and video and a large green monster in the basement (Lloyd?). It's certainly a huge database that could be useful to non-prestel members needing to know about flights at the last minute.

THE CINEMA: If you're looking for a bit of a giggle, then this is your department. It's a weekly-updated story for you to read. At the moment it's James Glond in 'Go On, Say Never Again'. If you enjoy that sort of thing, you're welcome to it!

That's all the areas currently available on *Hotel California*. It's quite small and reminds me of *The Midnight Micronetter's Club* (* TMMC$) too much. I wouldn't be surprised if the same people wrote it.

Overall, I am very critical of *Hotel California*. A lot of people run better bulletin boards using normal phone lines. There is no way it could stand up to systems like *The Gnome At Home* (01 888 8894). It could succeed if the price was slashed to a London number, but at 25p a minute, its very usage is a joke. When researching it, I had to run through it as quickly as possible as I did not want to be charged £1.00 for every four minutes. It could only prove useful for the travel section or maybe the quiz section. Using the chatline would prove to be far too expensive. This is highlighted in the case of using *TeleTalk*. On Micronet, the average usage time for each caller is around an hour. If you stayed around that long on *Hotel California*, it would cost you £15 at cheap rate! If you weigh up the pros and cons, you realise Telemap have got a real loser. Unless Loadsa Money stays on 24 hours a day!

Hotel California: For Viewdata Systems 0898 100890.

TELETALK SURPRISE

Here's an update on *TeleTalk*, following the article last month. Then, I said that the expected price would be around 1.5p per minute for using the *TeleTalk* gateway. I couldn't be more wrong: when it opened, the price set was the surprisingly large sum of 3p per minute. That works out at £1.80 an hour! Micronet users reacted angrily to this, many deliberating avoiding the service in the hope that Micronet might lower the price. I phoned Micronet and revealed this to them. David Rosembaum, their PR man, said he had been unaware of this and would look into it. He explained that the gateway it uses is very expensive to operate and the lower priced *Shades* only just makes a profit. This is true, but if the price was lowered, a lot more people would use the system and the lost money would easily be recuperated!

Despite the problems just mentioned, Micronet's *TeleTalk* (* TELETALK$) has become a marvellous success for them. Many people have started using the system for private and open discussions ranging from how much alcohol they could consume to the ancient Greek language! The private rooms have been used quite a lot, as well as the bar for open talks. Some of the personas created are quite remarkable: Aardvark, Cocquette, Socrates, Squiggle and Hell are some of the regular users. The funniest names often provide the funniest chat on the system. One command I forgot to mention last month has been put to a lot of use. This is EMOTE. By using the EMOTE command you can apparently become more 'real' and create things that aren't there. Here's an example:

Typing, 'EMOTE gets a drink from the bar' would produce:

Paul gets a drink from the bar

Using this has great possibilities. From 'Paul beats up the nearest foghorn' to 'Paul plays Des O'connor on the jukebox'. If any of you TeleTalk users out there can think up a good EMOTE, then MBX me it on 219995412.

Also, a range of commands have been discovered that perform actions similar to what EMOTE produces.

KISS (Name) produces (You) kisses (Name) slowly and sexily!

BOOGIE produce (You) boogies on down!

BOP produces something very long and complicated!

BLUSH produces (You) blushes

GRIN produces (You) grins infectiously!

LAUGH produces (You) roars with laughter

And my favourite of all:

POGO produces (You) pogos violently, doing the Siddance, yeah!

If you know any commands, MBX them to me!

Another hidden secret in *TeleTalk*'s conference centre is the new annexe. Typing GOTO BAC takes you to Forum 2, and area designed for talks by users to an audience. It has many seats and a podium for speakers to stand. Also there are private party rooms, but I haven't found them yet! If you have any further information, please MBX me!

Before I leave this subject, a big Hi! to Jazmine, who claims to be a games reviewer for CRASH! After a little conversation, I still couldn't get her full name!!

AND FINALLY, THE HARDWARE MARKET!

IF ANY SPECTRUM owners who use different computers for communications are reading, Dataphone have launched their brand new modem.

Dataphone have long been famous for their brilliant *Demon* modem. Now they have launched the *Designer* Modem. It's based on the *Demon II* but has full BABT approval. Among it's many features it has an auto answer, auto dial, handles 1200/1200 half-duplex and 300/300, as well as viewdata, of course. If your software does not have auto dial built in, you can dial manually by pressing the override switch.

It fits to any computer with an RS232 or RS423 and has a 25-way D-style connector. It comes with a power supply, mains plug and a three metre telephone cable. There's a power switch mounted on it (Which I always find useful) and six LEDs to show full status.

Dataphone say the modem will retail 'For less than £100' which, as we all know, means £99.95 or similar. It looks like a very good deal at the price, especially with the auto-dial facility. If you need an approved, low-cost modem, then this is the one to go for. For more details, contact Dataphone Ltd at *22 Alfric Square, Woodstone, Peterborough, PE2 0JP* or phone (0733) 230240.

CRASH
COMPETITION





WITH A +3 AND 14-INCH TV FROM Imagine

SCUMVILLES'S inhabitants, source of all the hero's troubles in Imagine's Smashed *Target Renegade* are less than keen to do anyone a favour. Ask them for directions and they'll give you a kick in the teeth. Go out of your way to avenge the death of your brother and you've really got your work cut out; skinheads, Beastie Boys fans and manic motorcyclists are just the start of one long round of trouble. The only way to get your own back is to fist-fight, wrestle, spar and box your way to the final level and the ultimate confrontation with underworld leader Mr Big . . .

Or is it? CRASH is giving you a much less strenuous chance of getting back at the Scumville urban bandits. Just design the meanest, nastiest, most malicious, callous and contemptible city crook, equip him with whatever you think a streetwise scoundrel is likely to be carrying, stick your idea on a piece of paper and send it off to us. Remember that a city thug isn't going to have too much money to buy fancy weapons, so no bazookas or mega blasting machine guns please. You'll be judged on the basis of your idea, not the quality of your materials, so an original pencil drawing is just as likely to win as an elaborate airbrushed offering which in any case we can't return.

The most exciting, imaginative and resourceful effort will be rewarded with brand new Spectrum +3 and a shiny, gleaming 14-inch portable TV. As if that isn't enough Imagine are also throwing in a copy of *Target Renegade* as well as **nine** other disk-based games and a *Target Renegade* T-shirt. A single second prize winner receives **ten** Ocean/Imagine games on cassette (*Target Renegade, Firefly, Renegade, Revenge of Doh, Rastan, Platoon, Combat School, Head over Heels, Matchday II* and *Wizball*) plus a T-shirt and there are **five** cassette versions of the sports compilation *We are the Champions* awaiting further runners-up.

Entries, on one sheet of paper with your name and address, should be sent to: **IMAGINE RIGHT ON TARGET COMP, CRASH, *PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB*** and must be received by June 7. The decision of the appointed CRASH judges is final and binding in all respects.

NOTE TV MAY DIFFER FROM THAT SHOWN



the CRASH CHARTS

TOP GAMES MAY

The three charts compiled from the votes of CRASH readers is the most realistic chart for gauging the popularity of Spectrum games – it is the games that are being played that get the votes, not the games that are in the shops this week or month.

And the votes are important. It's up to you to let us know what you feel, so fill in the voting forms which live on the results pages and in FRONTLINE to make your voice heard.

If you don't want to carve up your issue of CRASH, we understand. Use a photocopy if you like, or copy the details from the voting forms onto a postcard, or the back of a sealed envelope, and send that to us instead.

Apart from the satisfaction of registering your vote, there's always the chance of winning a prize. Each month we draw 15 winners from all the voting forms received – five for the HOTLINE, five for the ADVENTURE and five for the STRATEGY chart.

A top prize of £40 worth of software (your choice, not ours) and a CRASH T-shirt is awarded to the first slip drawn from the HOTLINE votes, and another £40 of goodies and a shirt goes to the ADVENTURE and £20 of goodies and a shirt goes to the STRATEGY

Four runners up from each ballot box collect a CRASH T-shirt and a CRASH Hat. So get those votes in to the **CRASH HOTLINE CHART**, **CRASH ADVENTURE CHART** and **CRASH STRATEGY CHART**: *PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB.*

Match Day II **and** Exolon **again swap places – this time the sports simulation gains the coverted Number One position. Imagine's** Renegade **stubbornly stays at Number Two with** Out Run **moving rapidly up the charts at Number Five. New entries this month include the film tie-in from Ocean,** Platoon, **and Digital Integration's** ATF.

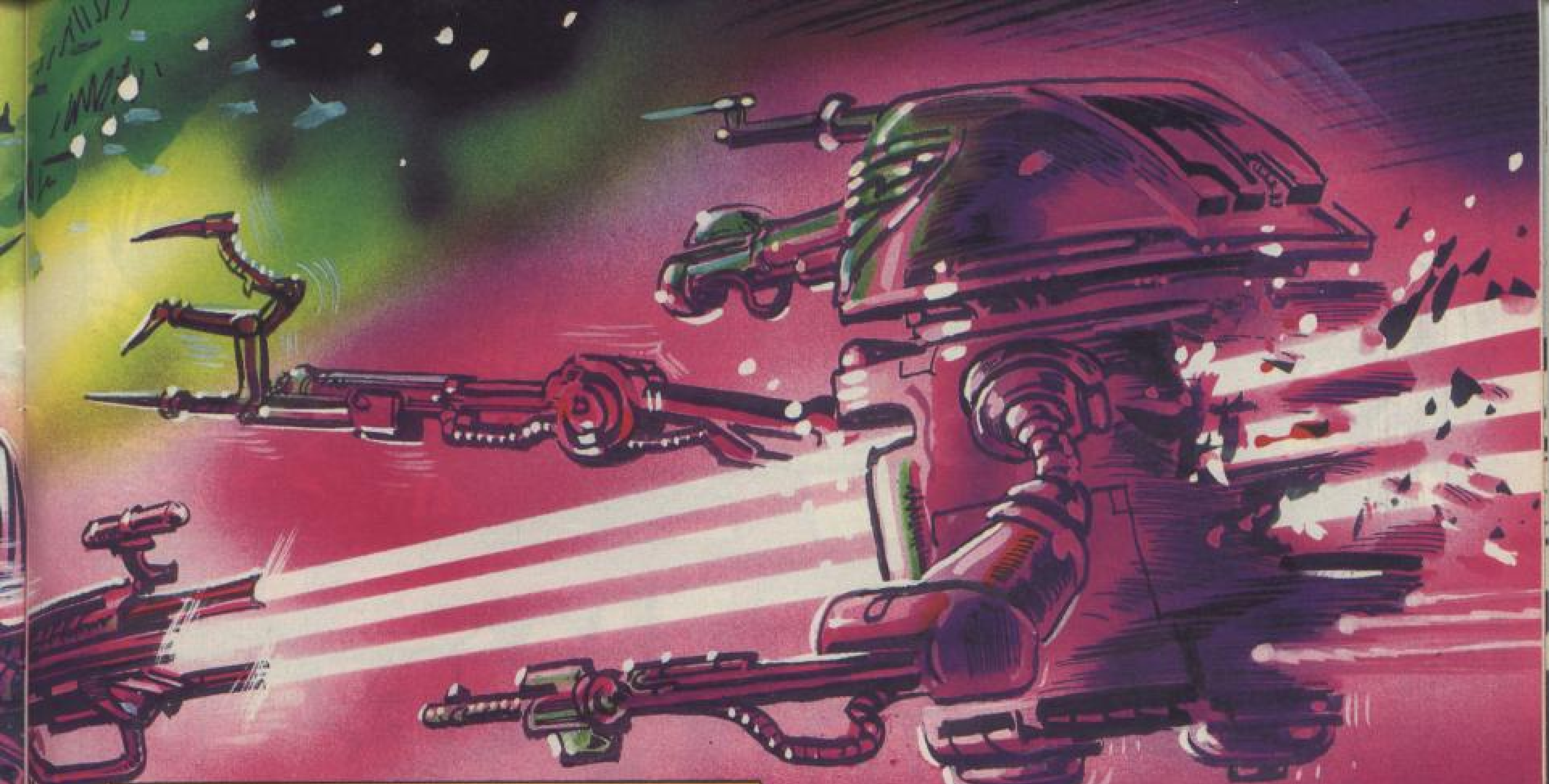
Little ol' (he's only size 30) Stuart Highley ***from Keyworth in Nottinghamshire scoops this month's £40 worth of software. He doesn't mind what he has, so long as it includes*** Northstar ***by Gremlin Graphics. He also receives a CRASH cap and, like these four runners up, a CRASH T-shirt. The lucky second-placers are:*** Simon Milledge ***hailing from Holmer near Hereford;*** Anthony Hannah ***from Irlam in Manchester;*** Mike Byford ***from down in Romford, Essex and*** Dave Martin ***who lives in Ipswich.***

Read last month's chart box for a description of this month's Strategy Chart – it's, yet again, practically the same. Either it's the same people voting many times or there's a distinct lack of strategy games on the market.

For Colin Brickwood ***of Brandon in Sussex there's nothing better in the strategy world than*** Lords Of Midnight ***– that went top of his list, along with*** Doomdark's Revenge ***and*** The Sentinel, ***gaining 10 out of 10. His £40 worth of software –*** Firefly, ATF ***etc should be in his hands now. The four CRASH T-shirt winners this month are*** Paul Rooke ***in Fatfield, Tyne & Wear;*** Douggie Farqhuarson ***of Dundee;*** Wayne Morledge ***from the fair city of Ilkeston and*** Sebastian Sampson ***who lives in the Surrey town of Weybridge***

Strategy Top 10

1 *(1)*	**VULCAN**	CCS
2 *(2)*	**LORDS OF MIDNIGHT**	BEYOND
3 *(3)*	**ARNHEM**	CCS
4 *(4)*	**DOOMDARK'S REVENGE**	BEYOND
5 *(6)*	**DESERT RATS**	CCS
6 *(7)*	**TOBRUK**	PSS
7 *(9)*	**BATTLE OF BRITAIN**	PSS
8 *(8)*	**THEATRE EUROPE**	PSS
9 *(5)*	**REBELSTAR RAIDERS**	FIREBIRD
10 *(10)*	**THEIR FINEST HOUR**	CENTURY H



Hotline Top 20

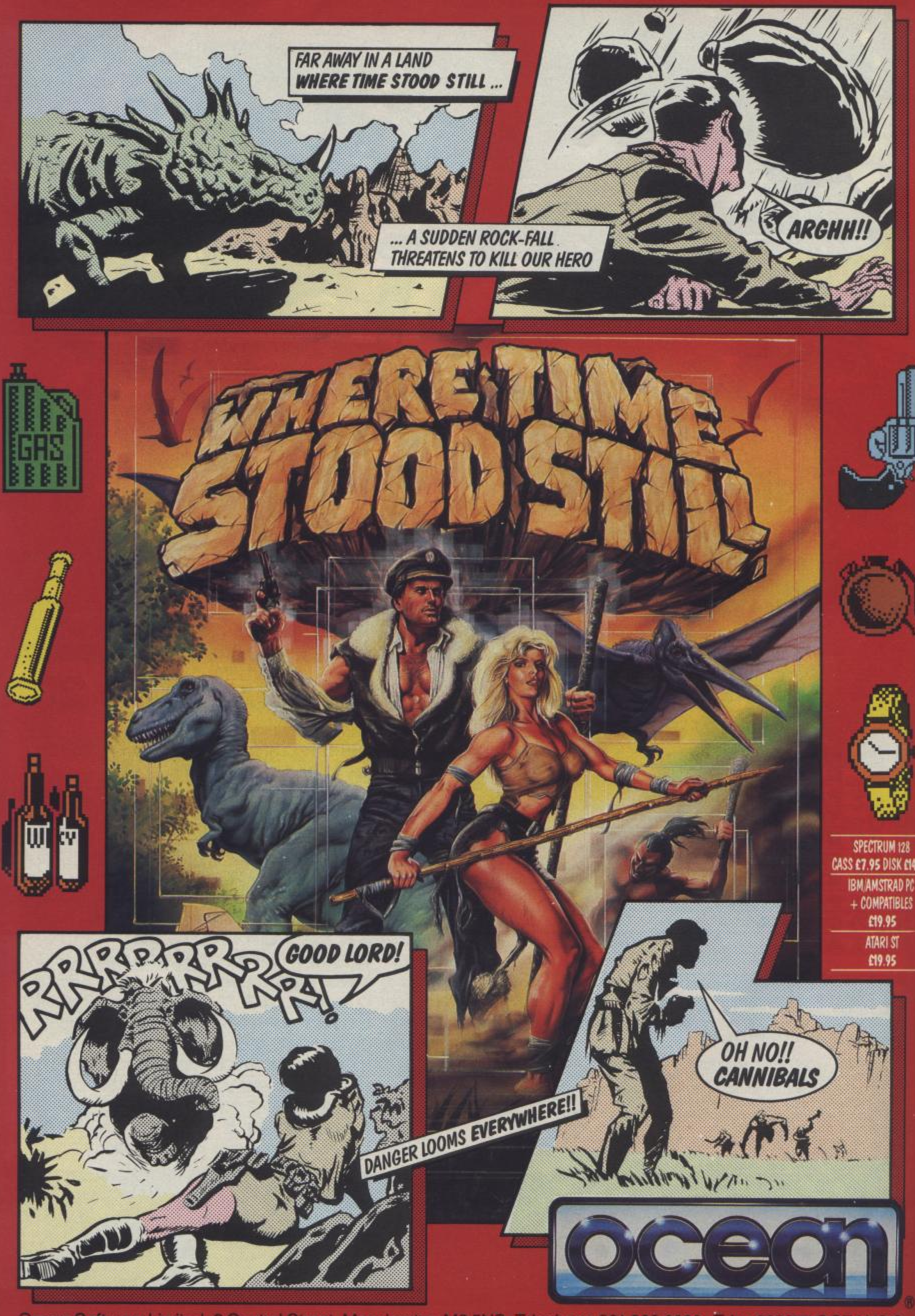
1 (3)	MATCH DAY II	OCEAN
2 (2)	RENEGADE	IMAGINE
3 (1)	EXOLON	HEWSON
4 (8)	COMMANDO	ELITE
5 (13)	OUT RUN	US GOLD
6 (7)	ELITE	FIREBIRD
7 (8)	ENDURO RACER	ACTIVISION
8 (12)	DRILLER	INCENTIVE
9 (4)	ZYNAPS	HEWSON
10 (5)	HEAD OVER HEELS	OCEAN
11 (9)	MATCH DAY	OCEAN
12 (6)	GAUNTLET	US GOLD
13 (▶)	PLATOON	OCEAN
14 (-)	THUNDERCATS	ELITE
15 (11)	BUBBLE BOBBLE	FIREBIRD
16 (14)	FLYING SHARK	FIREBIRD
17 (15)	STARGLIDER	RAINBIRD
18 (20)	PAPERBOY	ELITE
19 (17)	COBRA	OCEAN
20 (▶)	ATF	DIGITAL INTEGRATION

Adventure Top 20

1 (1)	THE HOBBIT	MELBOURNE HOUSE
2 (4)	STORMBRINGER	M.A.D.
3 (2)	SPELLBOUND	M.A.D.
4 (5)	LORDS OF MIDNIGHT	BEYOND
5 (6)	KNIGHT TYME	M.A.D.
6 (10)	RED MOON	LEVEL 9
7 (4)	THE BOGGIT	CRL
8 (11)	THE PAWN	RAINBIRD
9 (9)	DOOMDARK'S REVENGE	BEYOND
10 (18)	KILLED UNTIL DEAD	US GOLD
11 (8)	HEAVY ON THE MAGICK	GARGOYLE
12 (14)	THE BIG SLEAZE	PIRANHA
13 (12)	GREMLINS	ADVENTURE INTERNATIONAL
14 (7)	LORD OF THE RINGS	MELBOURNE H
15 (16)	DRACULA	CRL
16 (-)	THE PRICE OF MAGIK	LEVEL 9
17 (-)	RIGEL'S REVENGE	MASTERTRONIC
18 (17)	BORED OF THE RINGS	CRL
19 (19)	FAIRLIGHT 2	THE EDGE
20 (13)	DUN DARACH	GARGOYLE GAMES

I wish someone would knock The Hobbit **off the Number One position – now that would be something to talk about!** Killed Until Dead **enters the Top Ten for the first time this month and** Rigel's Revenge**, along with** The Price Of Magik**, make reappearances in the May Adventure Chart.**

A not-very-Scottish sounding Stephen Kasiewicz ***from Glasgow receives the winner's prize of £40 worth of software (not necessarily adventure games) this month – along with the obligatory CRASH hat and T-shirt. He requests*** The Hobbit ***and*** Dracula ***amongst his choice, but also votes for them! Surely some mistake Stephen. May runners up are*** David Lane ***in West Bridgford, Nottingham;*** Andrew Robinson ***form the popular holiday resort of Bournemouth;*** David Marshall ***of Alderley Edge in Cheshire and*** Kevin Johnson ***from Grand National Aintree.***


FAR AWAY IN A LAND WHERE TIME STOOD STILL ...
... A SUDDEN ROCK-FALL THREATENS TO KILL OUR HERO
ARGHH!!
WHERE TIME STOOD STILL
GAS
SPECTRUM 128
CASS £7.95 DISK £14.95
IBM/AMSTRAD PC + COMPATIBLES £19.95
ATARI ST £19.95
RRRRRRRRR!
GOOD LORD!
DANGER LOOMS EVERYWHERE!!
OH NO!! CANNIBALS
ocean

Nick Roberts's

PLAYING TIPS



SPECIAL

GET THROUGH THE MOST CHALLENGING GAMES – CRASH SHOWS YOU THE WAY WITH A BONANZA TIPS SPECIAL – PAGES AND PAGES OF TIPS, CHEATS, POKES AND MAPS!

In its time CRASH Playing Tips has seemed more like *Dr Who* than a serious (well almost) POKE and tips section!

In the days of one-line POKEs (oh, what bliss) and monochromatic pages was Lloyd Mangram. Next to materialise was Robin Candy, who brought with him a new design for the top of the page and a splash of colour. All the time, POKE routines were getting longer and longer, making it harder work if you wanted to cheat. When Robin left a touch of glamour was indicated, and it arrived in the form of Hannah Smith, definitely the ONLY girlie tipster ever! She reigned over the tips empire for almost nine months until leaving for pastures new (that place must be pretty full of people because they all seem to go there!).

Lloyd stepped back into the hot seat for a bit while the hallowed ones at Newsfield hunted around for the next generation of Playing Tipsters to take Hannah's place. Suddenly a complete stranger turned up on the scene who went by the name of Nick Roberts (sounds familiar). After a few months of writing the tips he was confronted with the task of organising 16 pages of tips, POKE 'n' cartomania. And the rest – well let's just make it up as we go along!

TIPS FOR SOME*THING*!

Whenever you sit back and think you've finished the tips for another month, some*thing* always crops up. Yes you've guessed what I'm building up to . . . tips for Players's new budget game, *THING!* I have used the best bits out of letters from Andrew (Noddy) Wardman **from Keighley,** Nick Gitsham **of Bracknell,** Peter King **of Yeovil and last but not least** Simon Miles **also from Yeovil.**

Use telephone book in telephone box to teleport. Teleport to T. Go left and get the red megaherring. Use twice. Teleport to K. Go right and get the hat. Use twice. Teleport to J. Go right and get the American Express card and use. Teleport to H. Go left and get the Lobotomy kit and use. Teleport to L. Go left and get the can opener and go to C. Go left and get the can of food. Use can opener. Teleport to Y. Go right and get the bottle of Milk. Now teleport to B. Go right and get bottle opener. Use bottle opener. Teleport to A. Go right and get the Dingaburger. Then teleport to W. Now go left and get the Crazee Mustard. Use the mustard. Teleport to F. Go left and get the video player. Teleport to N. Go right and get the Bruce Lee video. Use the video player. You will now have a headache. Teleport to S. Go right and get the headache tablet. Use the tablet. Go to G. Go right and get the Virgin T Shirt. Teleport to Q. Go left and get the packet of Mates and use (it makes sense!). Finally teleport to E. Now go left to meet the Overlord.

The CRASH reviewer doesn't do anything (surprise, surprise!)

MEKON MILD?

At last it's the complete solution to *Dan Dare II* sent in by Simon Brown **of** Portsmouth. **Well done Simon, you win this month's £30 of software. Don't forget that the competition to produce working POKEs for the game is still open.**

LEVEL ONE

L, D, D, L, L, L, L, U, R, U, U, L, L, D, L, D, shoot computer, R, R, D, D, shoot supertreen, U, R, R, R, R, D, shoot supertreen, D, shoot supertreens, D, R, pick up extra energy, L, D, wait for crusher to crush two times, down into crusher, L, shoot supertreen, D, L, D, shoot supertreen, D, L, L, L, U, R, U, U, L, L, D, R, shoot blast doors, go in, wait for them to close, level one complete.

LEVEL TWO

R, R, D, L, D, D, L, shoot computer and supertreen, D, lose a life, get extra fire power, D, D, D, D, shoot supertreen, L, L, L, shoot supertreens, R, R, R, U, U, R, D, D, shoot supertreen, D, L, shoot supertreens, R, U, U, R, D, D, R, get radio behind door, U, shoot supertreen, D, L, L, U, U, U, U, R, D, R, D, R, get behind blast doors, level two complete.

LEVEL THREE

R, U, U, U, R, R, D, shoot computer, U, L, L, U, L, replenish energy, R, U, R, through fake blast doors, R, U, U, L, shoot supertreen, R, D, D, L, through fake blast doors, L, D, L, replenish energy, R, D, D, L, shoot supertreen, D, L, U, L, D, L, shoot supertreens, U, L, L, shoot supertreen, R, U, collect screen behind door, D, R, R, D, D, U, R, U, R, R, R, get behind blast doors, level three complete.

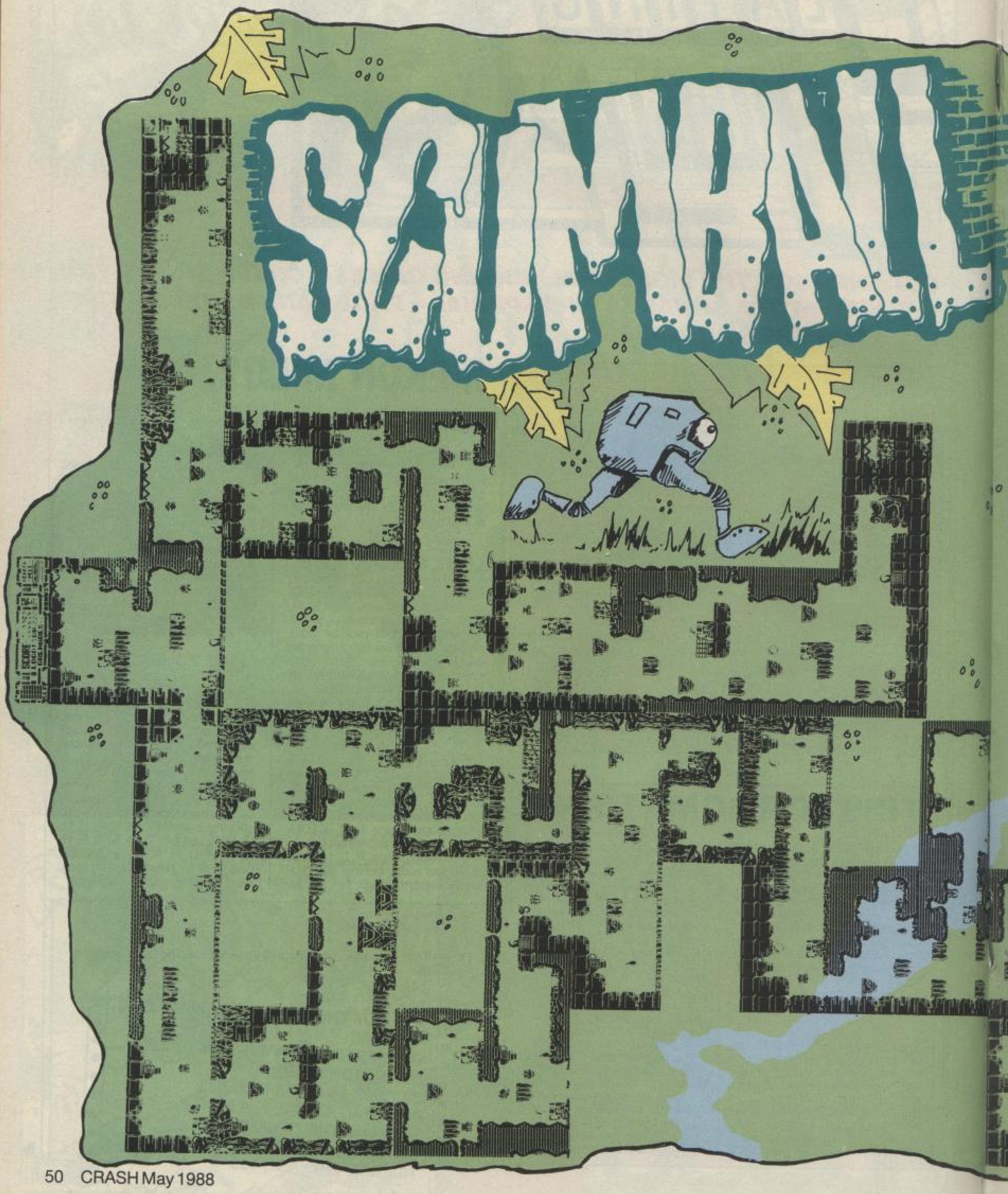
LEVEL FOUR

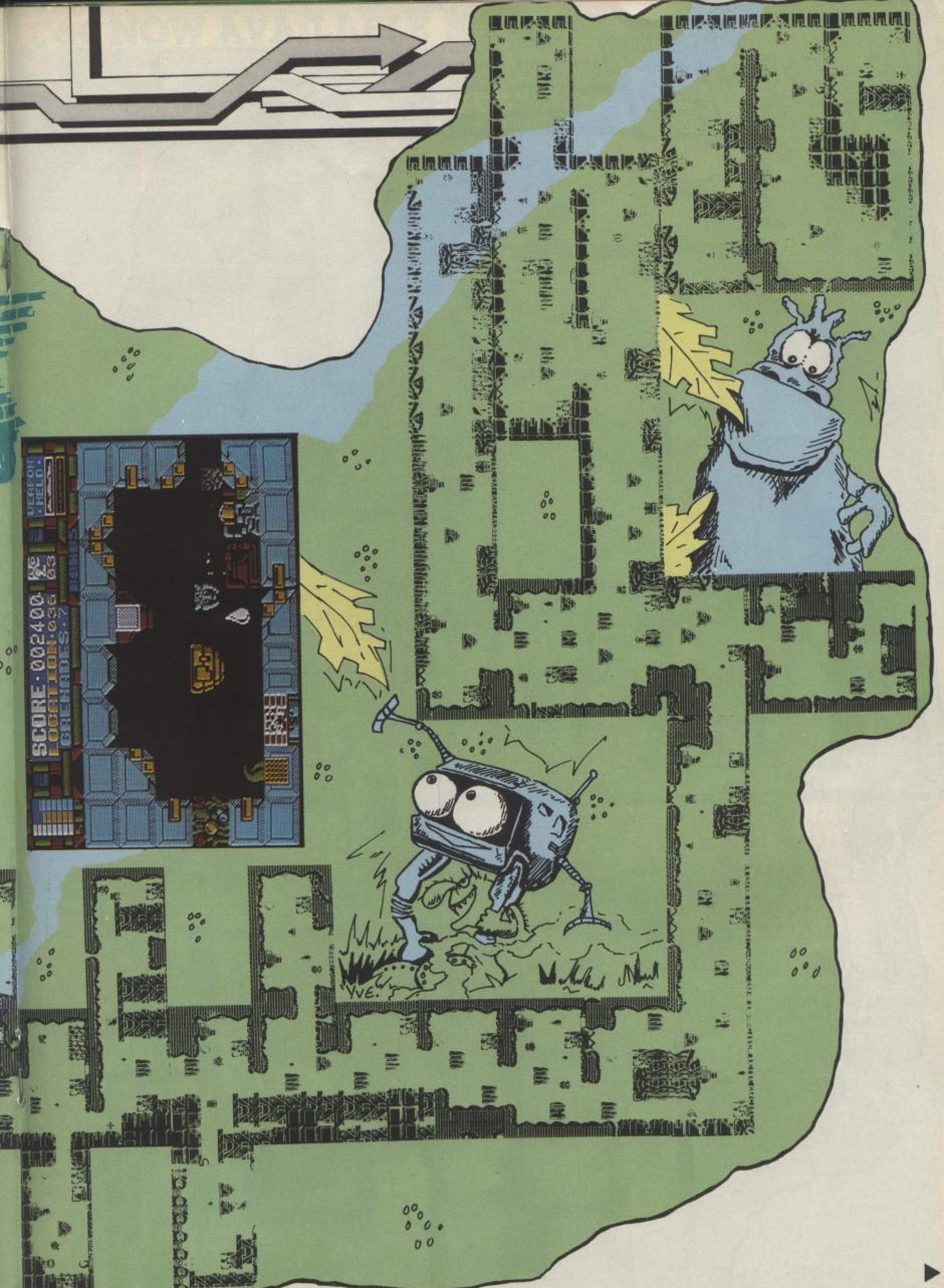
R, R, R, R, U, R, get extra energy, L, U, U, R, R, U, R, D, R, U, U, U, L, shoot computer and supertreen, R, D, D, D, L, shoot supertreen, U, U, shoot supertreen, D, L, L,, shoot supertreen, R, D, D, L, L, D, L, shoot supertreen, R, D, D, D, D, shoot supertreen, D, D, L, shoot supertreen, R, U, U, U, U, L, L, D, L, get treen disguise, R, R, D, shoot supertreens, U, U, R, U, U, U, R, R, U, U, R, D, R, U, R, R, R, R, R, R, U, R, R, get in escape pod, wait for timer to reach zero. level four and game complete!

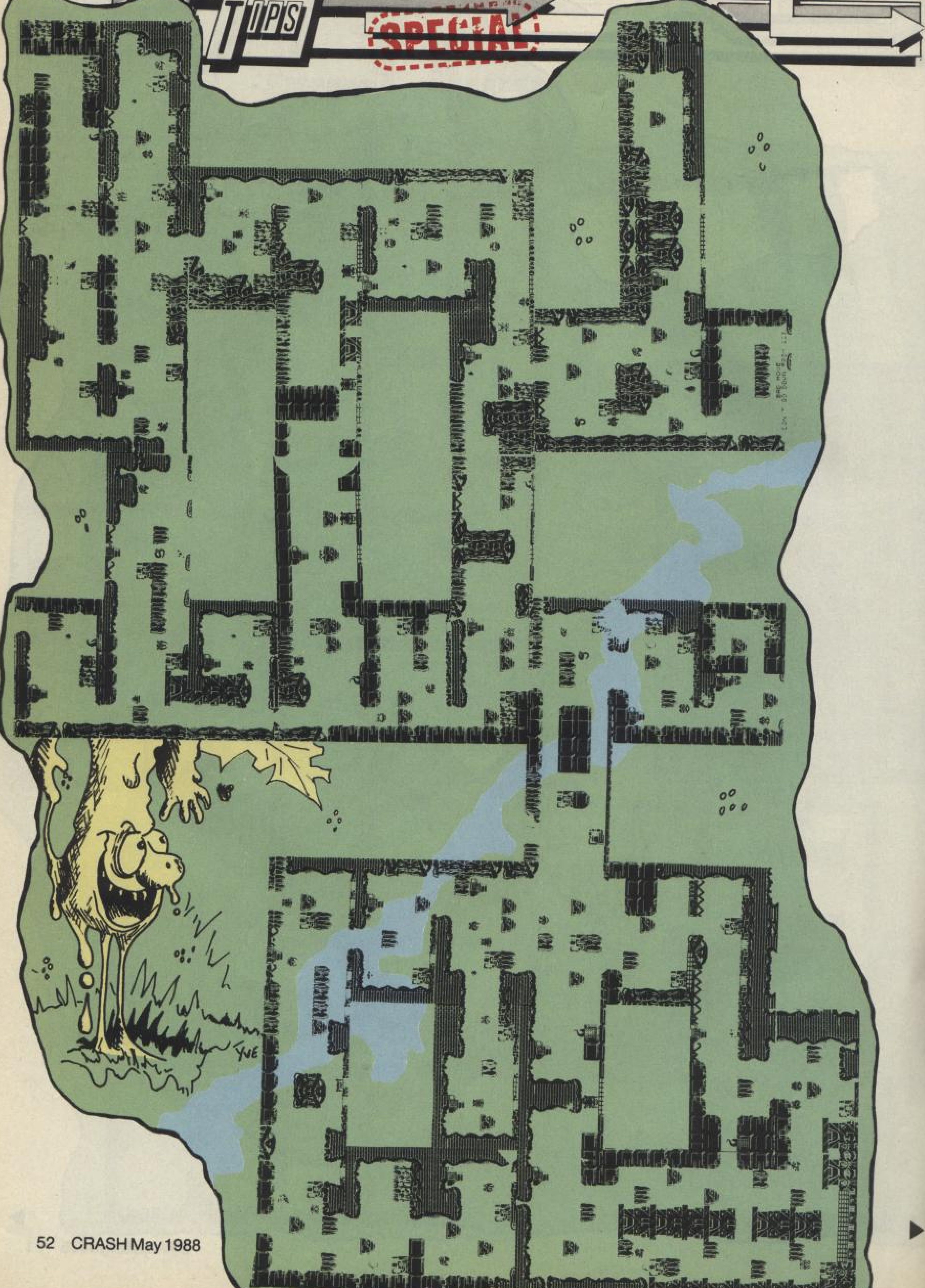
NORTHSTAR

It's the Tefal Men **again with an infinite lives routine for Gremlin's *Northstar*.**

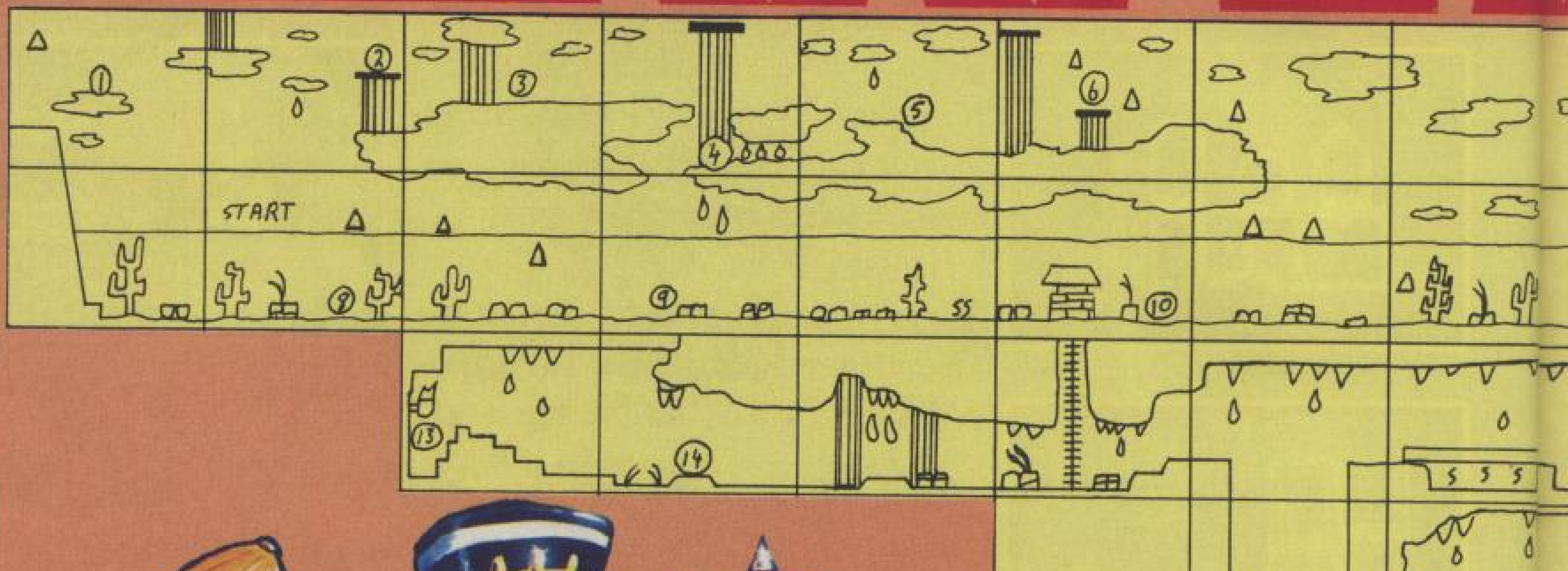
```
1   REM THE TEFAL MEN (MEL + STE)
    1988
10  PAPER 0:BORDER 0:INK 0:CLS
20  LOAD""CODE
30  FOR F=65448 TO 65455
40  READ A:POKE F, A:NEXT F
50  RANDOMIZE USR 65428
60  DATA 62, 36, 50, 243, 188
70  DATA 195, 191, 183
```

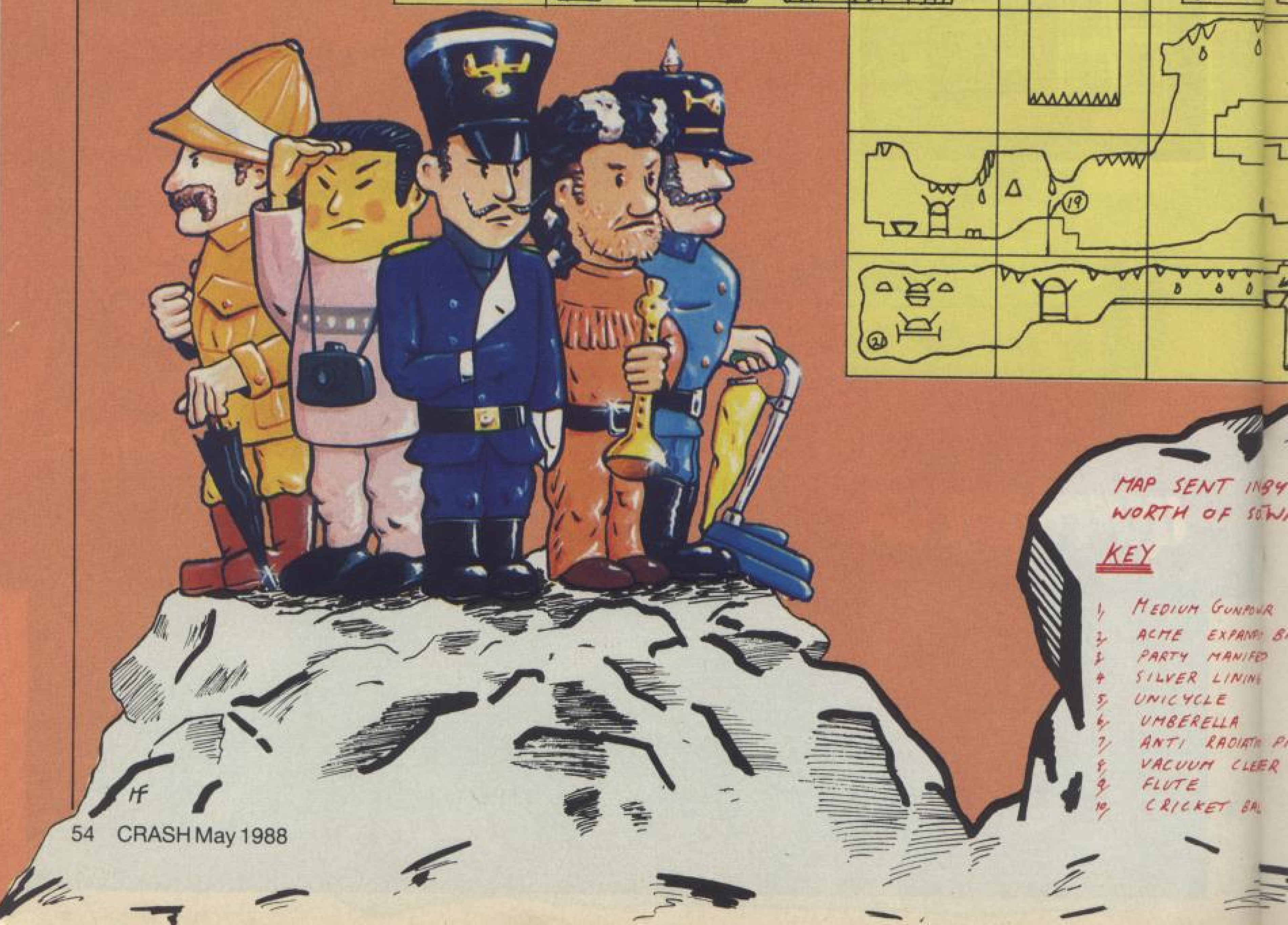



SCORE·002400
LOCATION·036
GRENADES·7
BONUS
WEAPON HELD

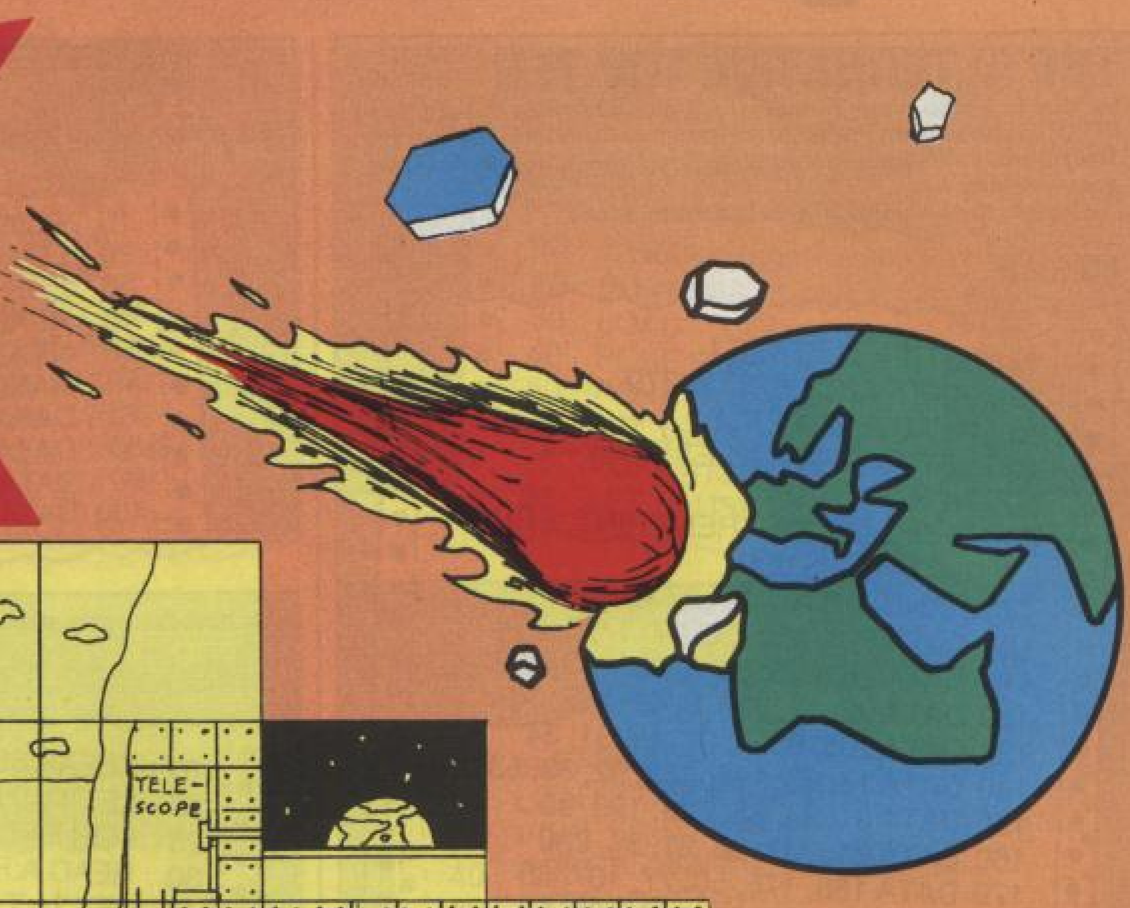


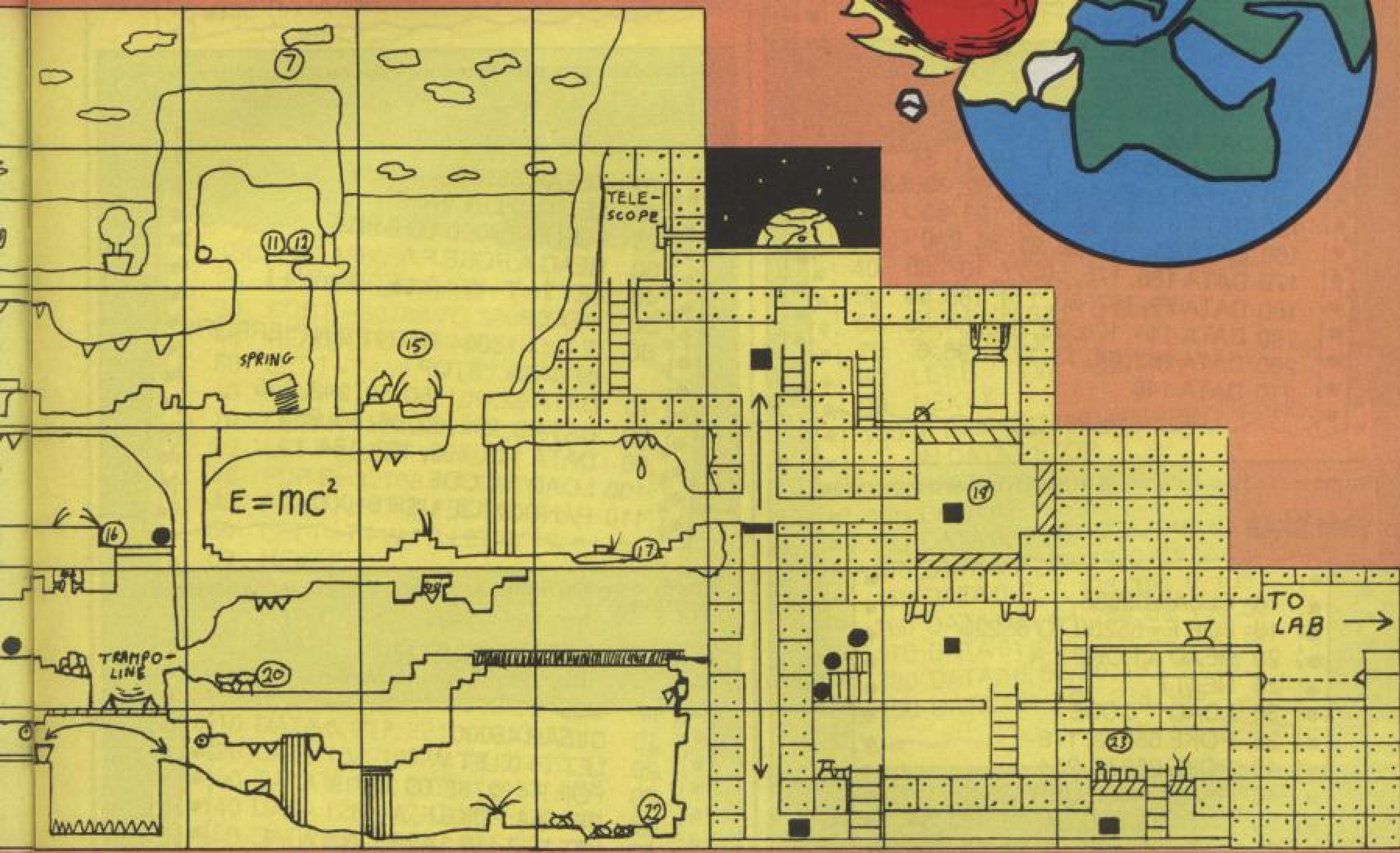
TERRAM


START
1
2
3
4
5
6
8
9
10
13
14
19
21


HF
MAP SENT IN BY
WORTH OF SOWI
KEY
1, MEDIUM GUNPOUR
2, ACME EXPANDI BA
3, PARTY MANIFED
4 SILVER LINING
5, UNICYCLE
6, UMBERELLA
7, ANTI RADIATI PI
8, VACUUM CLEER
9, FLUTE
10, CRICKET BA

EX

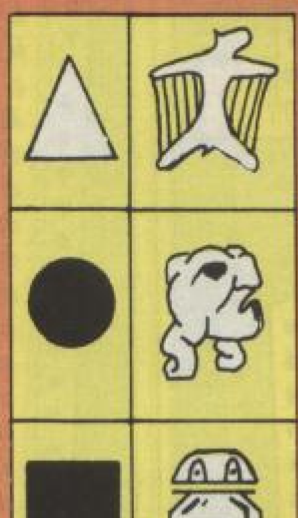




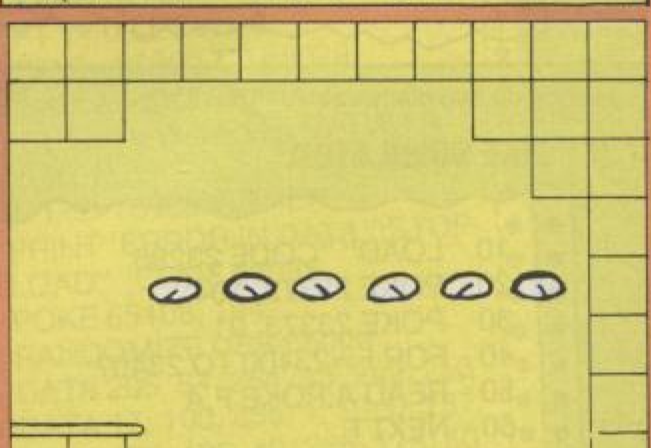
N BY IAN BENTLEY WHO WON £30
OFWARE

OWDER
NPIN BRIDGE.
FESTO
NG
TION PILLS
LEANER
BALL

11 BELLOWS
12 SPURS
13 SMALL GUNPOWDER
14 FLASH GUN
15 LARGE GUNPOWDER
16 SWITCH
17 BEER BARREL
18 ENERGY CRYSTAL
19 COAT HANGER
20 BATTERY
21 ATOMIC PILE
22 CUP OF TEA



PROF. EYESTRAIN'S LABORATORY



THE ALTERNATIVE TOP TEN

Hi, this is Nicko, your friendly TJ (tipjockey) with the top ten POKE routines from Paella 'n' Sausages of Camberley in Surrey. They don't say what each routine does so I assume that they are all infinite lives.

Straight in at NUMBER 10 is the routine for . . .

MASK II

```
10  LET T=0:LET W=1
20  FOR F=23306 TO 23379
30  READ A:POKE F,A
40  LET T=T+W * A:LET W=W+1
50  NEXT F
60  IF T<>271385 THEN PRINT"ERROR
    IN DATA":STOP
70  RANDOMIZE USR 23306
100 DATA 221, 33, 0, 0, 17, 17, 0, 175
110 DATA 55, 205, 86, 5, 221, 33, 203
120 DATA 92, 17, 213, 0, 62, 255, 55
130 DATA 205, 86, 5, 33, 44, 91, 34
140 DATA 13, 93, 195, 232, 92, 33, 53
150 DATA 91, 34, 38, 228, 195, 99
160 DATA 215, 33, 35, 91, 34, 239
170 DATA 186, 175, 50, 77, 167, 50
180 DATA 79, 167, 50, 114, 168, 50
190 DATA 144, 175, 33, 0, 0, 34, 88
200 DATA 162, 34, 13, 177, 195, 0
210 DATA 148
```

No move for *Yogi*, he's still at NUMBER 9 (cue printer noise!).

YOGI BEAR

```
10 CLEAR 65535
15 FOR F=65200 TO 65220
20 READ A:POKE F,A
25 NEXT F
30 LOAD""CODE
35 POKE 65072, 176
40 POKE 65073, 254
45 RANDOMIZE USR 58112
50 DATA 33, 0, 0, 34, 18, 137, 34
60 DATA 20, 137, 62, 24, 50, 226
70 DATA 175, 175, 50, 84, 136
80 DATA 105, 0, 132
```

Moving up two places at NUMBER 8 it's . . .

JET BIKE SIMULATOR

```
10 LOAD""CODE 23296
20 POKE 23372, 104
30 POKE 23373, 91
40 FOR F=23400 TO 23407
50 READ A:POKE F,A
60 NEXT F
70 DATA 62, 201, 50, 20, 106
80 DATA 195, 198, 92
90 RANDOMIZE USR 23296
```

Winning all the way to the top it's the Fruit Machine Simulator at NUMBER 7.

FRUIT MACHINE SIMULATOR

```
10  BORDER 1
20  LOAD""SCREEN$
30  FOR F=23296 TO 23315
40  READ A:POKE F, A
50  NEXT F
60  RANDOMIZE USR 23296
70  DATA 221, 33, 123, 95, 17
80  DATA 130, 158, 62, 155, 55
90  DATA 205, 86, 5, 175, 50
100 DATA 234, 192, 205, 27, 207
```

No hassle up this street because this one's still at NUMBER 6.

STREET HASSLE

```
10  CLEAR 65535
20  LET T=0:LET W=0
25  FOR F=64000 TO 64015
30  READ A:POKE F,A
40  LET T=T+W * A:LET W=W+1
50  NEXT F
60  IF T<>18004 THEN PRINT"ERROR
    IN DATA":STOP
70  DATA 62, 201, 50, 52, 242, 205
80  DATA 3, 242, 62, 36, 50, 253
90  DATA 143, 195, 152, 184
100 LOAD""CODE
110 RANDOMIZE USR 64000
```

Freddy is getting harder every day, trying to retain his place at NUMBER 5.

FREDDY HARDEST (PART I)

```
10  CLEAR 45000
20  LET T=0:LET W=0
30  FOR F=32768 TO 32919
40  READ A:POKE F, A
50  LET T=T+W * A:LET W=W+1
60  NEXT F
70  IF T<>1360867 THEN
    PRINT"ERROR IN DATA":STOP
80  LOAD""CODE
90  RANDOMIZE USR 32768
100 DATA 221, 33, 134, 128, 217, 6
110 DATA 6, 217, 221, 110, 0, 221
120 DATA 102, 1, 221, 78, 2, 6, 0, 17
130 DATA 0, 125, 237, 176, 33, 107
140 DATA 128, 1, 7, 0, 237, 176, 30
150 DATA 231, 145, 0, 125, 221, 35
160 DATA 231, 35, 221, 35, 217, 16
170 DATA 217, 217, 33, 119, 232, 17
180 DATA 167, 251, 1, 30, 3, 237, 176
190 DATA 33, 0, 200, 34, 189, 254
200 DATA 62, 195, 50, 197, 254, 33
210 DATA 78, 128, 34, 148, 254, 195
220 DATA 169, 254, 33, 0, 200, 17
```

FREDDY HARDEST

```
230 DATA 197, 254, 1, 11, 1, 237, 176
240 DATA 175, 50, 64, 255, 33, 113
250 DATA 128, 17, 217, 62, 24, 50
260 DATA 237, 176, 195, 197, 254
270 DATA 49, 177, 175, 195, 37, 128
280 DATA 253, 33, 58, 92, 237, 86
290 DATA 33, 88, 39, 217, 62, 24, 50
300 DATA 5, 244, 49, 223, 96, 195, 0
310 DATA 91, 18, 224, 16, 34, 224, 36
320 DATA 114, 224, 12, 126, 224, 14
330 DATA 140, 224, 25, 176, 224, 13
```

There's no stopping Freddy as he also holds his ground at NUMBER 4**.**

FREDDY HARDEST (PART II)

```
10CLEAR 45000
20  LET T=0:LET W=0
30  FOR F=32768 TO 32919
40  READ A:POKE F, A
50  LET T=T+W * A:LET W=W+1
60  NEXT F
10  CLEAR 45000
20  LET T=0:LET W=0
30  FOR F=32768 TO 32919
40  READ A:POKE F,A
50  LET T=T+W * A:LET W=W+1
60  NEXT F
70  IF T<>1378438 THEN
    PRINT"ERROR IN DATA":STOP
80  LOAD""CODE
90  RANDOMIZE USR 32768
100 DATA 221, 33, 134, 128, 217, 6
110 DATA 6, 217, 221, 110, 0, 221
120 DATA 102, 1, 221, 78, 2, 6, 0, 17
130 DATA 0, 125, 237, 176, 33, 107
140 DATA 128, 1, 7, 0, 237, 176, 30
150 DATA 231, 105, 0, 125, 221, 35
160 DATA 221, 35, 221, 35, 217, 16
170 DATA 217, 217, 33, 119, 232, 17
180 DATA 167, 251, 1, 30, 3, 237, 176
190 DATA 33, 0, 200, 34, 189, 254
200 DATA 62, 195, 50, 197, 254, 33
210 DATA 78, 128, 34, 198, 254, 195
220 DATA 169, 254, 33, 0, 200, 17
230 DATA 197, 254, 1, 11, 1, 237, 176
240 DATA 175, 50, 64, 255, 33, 113
250 DATA 128, 17, 217, 254, 1, 22, 0
260 DATA 237, 176, 195, 197, 254
270 DATA 49, 177, 175, 195, 37, 128
280 DATA 253, 33, 58, 92, 237, 86
290 DATA 33, 88, 39, 217, 62, 58, 50
300 DATA 92, 236, 49, 255, 97, 195, 0
310 DATA 91, 17, 224, 16, 33, 224, 36
320 DATA 113, 224, 12, 125, 224, 14
330 DATA 139, 224, 25, 175, 224, 13
```

It doesn't need much detective work to discover that Basil moves up ten places to NUMBER 3**.**

BASIL THE GREAT MOUSE DETECTIVE

```
10  CLEAR 27000
20  POKE 23607, 200
30  LOAD""CODE
40  POKE 55832, 251
50  POKE 55833, 201
60  LET 1=USR 55808
70  POKE 41302, 58
80  LET 1=USR 32768
```

At NUMBER 2 **it's the game of the TV series . . .**

KNIGHTMARE

```
10  CLEAR 32767
20  LOAD""CODE 65088
30  POKE 65108, 194
40  POKE 65092, 21
50  LET T=0:LET W=1
60  FOR F=65384 TO 65430
70  READ A:POKE F,A
80  LET B=T+W * A:LET W=W+1
90  NEXT F
100 IF T<>128715 THEN PRINT"ERROR
    IN DATA":STOP
110 RANDOMIZE USR 65409
120 DATA 62, 195, 50, 235, 145, 33
130 DATA 0, 91, 34, 236, 145, 33
140 DATA 244, 93, 17, 0, 91, 1, 15
150 DATA 0, 237, 176, 195, 0, 105
160 DATA 205, 64, 254, 62, 100, 50
170 DATA 81, 255, 195, 44, 255, 62
180 DATA 16, 50, 30, 151, 58, 37
190 DATA 151, 195, 238, 145
```

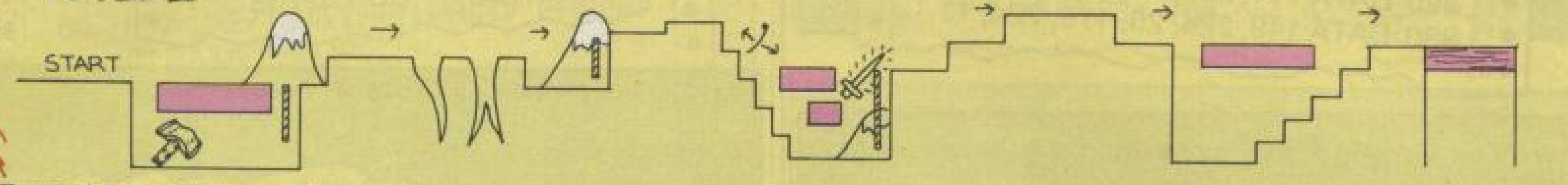
But NUMBER ONE **from** Paella 'n' Sausages**, especially for the Tips Special is Incentive's super smash . .**

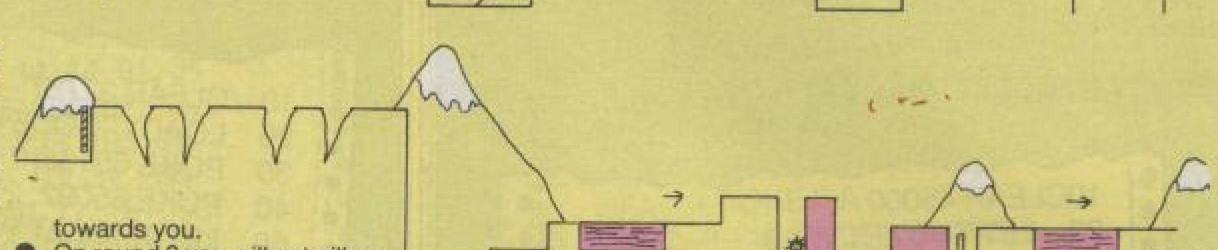
DRILLER

```
10  CLEAR 32765
20  LET T=0:LET W=0
30  FOR F=65000 TO 65029
40  READ A:POKE F, A
50  LET T=T+W * A:LET W=W+A
60  NEXT F
70  IF T<>7698950 THEN
    PRINT"ERROR IN DATA":STOP
80  LOAD""CODE 65088
90  POKE 65108, 194
100 RANDOMIZE USR 65000
110 DATA 205, 64, 254, 33, 249, 253
120 DATA 17, 100, 255, 1, 13, 0, 237
130 DATA 176, 195, 49, 255, 175, 50
140 DATA 118, 188, 50, 17, 143, 50
150 DATA 126, 191, 195, 164, 151
```

RASTAN

LEVEL 1

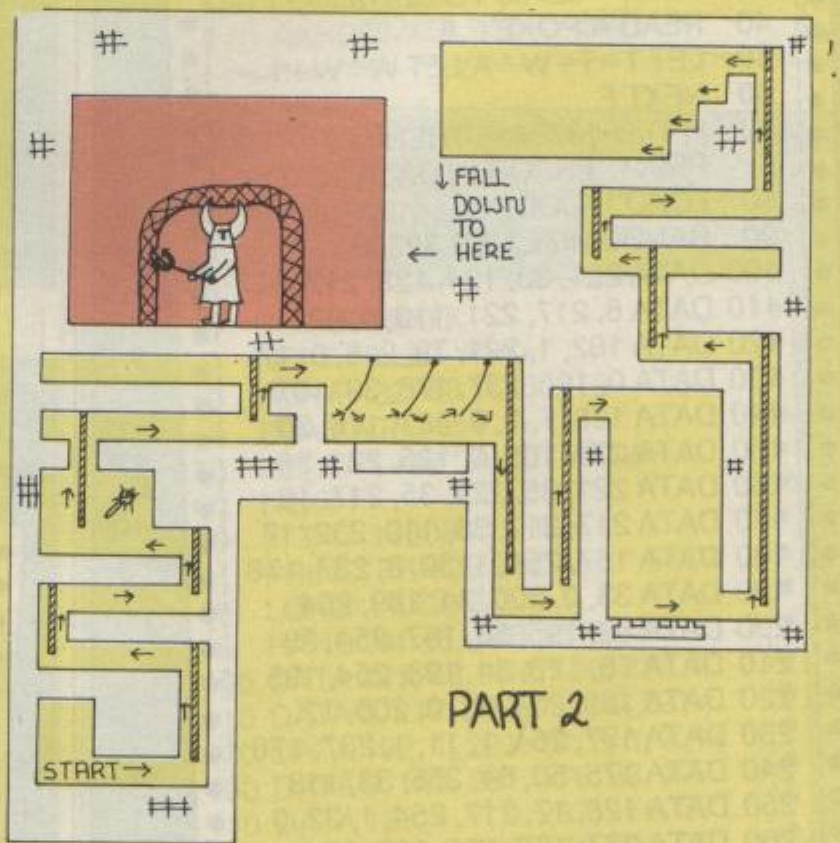




To go along with the map, here are a few tips from the cartographer himself, Steven Heppingstall **of Earlshilton.**

- To pick up a weapon, hold down fire and jump or drop onto it.
- Always take the underground route whenever possible because there are less of the bad guys.
- To kill the baddie at the end of round 1 crouch down because he cannot hurt you when you are in this position. To kill him you must stand up and hit him as he walks towards you.
- On round 2 you will get pillars that rise up and down over water, to do this, jump onto the first one, wait until the next has disappeared under the water and then jump towards it, the pillar should rise out of the water in time for you to land on. Repeat this procedure for each pillar.





PART 2

PINK PANTHER





Screen shot from Atari ST

Spectrum £8.99t
Spectrum +3 £12.99d
CBM 64/128 £9.99t £12.99d

GREMLIN



Screen shot from Amstrad

Amiga £19.99d
Atari ST £19.99d
Amstrad £9.99t £14.99d

MAGIC BYTES

Gremlin Graphics Software Ltd., Alpha House,
10 Carver Street, Sheffield S1 4FS. Tel: 0742 753423

CHEAT MODE MOTEL

Yes Mr Mangram, that'll be £20.00 including VAT, and I'll have your grated-carrot and coconut milk breakfast up as soon as poss . . . oh hello, I didn't see you there. This month the Motel has a superb selection of seductive cheats, for the complimentary use of the guests . . .

STREET HASSLE

When you die, you start kicking and hitting the floor. If you press L while on the floor you are asked if you want to skip a few levels. Press N for no and you are returned to the kicking, but with all your energy and lives.
(occupant: **Paul Eynstone**)

ROLLING THUNDER

On the menu screen type in JIMBO and you hear a beep. Now when you start the game you have infinite lives and energy, but not ammo. Now press I in the game to skip the level you are on. If you want to get rid of your infinite energy, just press CAPS SHIFT and N together.
(occupant: **Simon Stone**)

DRILLER

For unlimited shield, proceed to Obsidian and laser the southern end of the ground.
(occupants: **Incentive!**)

PREDATOR

After Level 1, when you die it says: REWIND TO START OF LEVEL!. Ignore the request and just press play on the tape. You now start on the next level with all your ammo, lives and energy full.
(occupant: **James O'Reilly**)

COMBAT ZONE

First pause the game by pressing 9. Now hold down 0 (zero), P, ENTER and C. When you unpause it you will have 5999 units of fuel and infinite smart bombs. If you pause it again and hold down 0 (zero), P, ENTER, C and Z, unpause it, and when you die you will get 244 lives. Nice isn't it?
(occupant: **Dean Gorle**)

POKER POKE

Yes, it's the one all Hollywood Poker **owners have been waiting for! These instructions will give you extra lives AND make you start with £245 and a skint opponent, making the game a bit more interesting. Thanks to** The Master Hacker **(Tim Calladene) of Leamington Spa for them.**

1 CLEAR 28024: LOAD "st2"
2 Play tape from start
3 POKE 36081,n (where n is the number of lives you want, up to 255)
4 To start with £245, POKE 36100,255: POKE 36678,255: POKE 36699,255
5 To make the girl start with no money, POKE 36101,10: POKE 36679,10: POKE 36700,10
6 To start the game POKE 16384,255: RANDOMIZE USR 28025

NEBULUS MULTIHACK

This is the idiot-proof (there's enough of them around here . . .) Multiface hack for infinite lives in Hewson's Nebulus.
To cancel the hack's effect, do it again but POKE 32921,53 instead of POKE 32921,0.

1 Load *Nebulus*
2 Press the little red button on top of the Multiface
3 Press T
4 Press SPACE
5 Type 32921,0
6 Press Q
7 Press R
8 Press FIRE to start game

ANYONE FOR MASH?

The POKEs tray on my freshly-tidied desk seems to have been taken over by a potato person! The first sheet I picked up was packed with POKEs from someone called Mashy **– and no address attached. So thanks for these POKEs, Mashy, whoever you are!**

SCUMBALL

```
10  REM SCUMBALL POKES
20  REM BY MASHY
30  PRINT"START SCUMBALL TAPE
    FROM THE START"
40  CLEAR 24599
50  LOAD""SCREEN$
60  POKE 23739,82:POKE 23740,0
70  LOAD""CODE
80  POKE 65036,0:REM INFINITE LIVES
90  POKE 52928,0:REM INFINITE
    ENERGY
100 PRINT USR 49048
```

BMX KIDZ

```
10  REM BMX KIDZ POKES
20  REM BY MASHY
30  PRINT"START BMX KIDZ TAPE
    FROM THE START"
40  CLEAR 24099
50  LOAD""CODE:LOAD""CODE
60  POKE 37392,0:REM INFINITE
    ENERGY
70  RUN USR 38526
```

DECIPHERING DEVIANTS

That brilliant Players game ***Deviants*** **had quite a few puzzles and codes to be found, but don't fret if you can't find them because** Eric Rogers **of Wolverhampton and** Lindsay Abery **of Bradfield, Nr Reading have come up with the goods.**

TELEPORT CODES

CERBURUS GUZZLOID
AURIGIUS EXCELSOR
XANTHIUS DEVIANTS CYBERNIA
ELECTRIX

BOMB ACTIVATION

	KEY VALVES TOGGLED
1	1 and 4
2	2 and 5
3	1 and 3
4	4 and 6
5	3 and 5
6	2 and 6

HINTS AND TIPS

☆ If you have a Multiface or similar device, stop the program on the bomb screen to work out what keys to press.

☆ The aliens take four hits to destroy so don't waste ammo.

☆ Devices that look like bombs but have a different top are just there to get in your way – don't bother with them.

☆ Use the roll to get under low obstacles, but remember that you can't shoot from the floor.

☆ If you enter the green and yellow archways they will replenish your energy.

☆ To replenish your ammo just pick up the capsules off the floor.

RAMPAGE

These drawings from Ian J Morrison **show the items that appear behind the windows in Activision's monster game** Rampage.


Gives energy and 40 points


Gives energy and 40 points

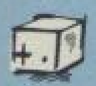

Gives energy and 40 points


Gives energy and 40 points


Gives variable amount of points


Gives variable amount of points

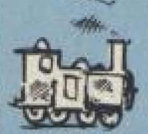

Gives 240 points


Gives 440 points


Armed guards give 140 points


Unarmed guards give 120 points


Hitting any vehicle or helicopter gives 500 points


Hitting the train gives 200 points


Reduces energy and gives 40 points


Reduces energy and gives 40 points


Reduces energy and gives 40 points


Reduces energy and gives 40 points

Annoyingly, the Rampage **instruction booklet doesn't mention anything about pause and abort keys, but Ian has discovered them. They are:**

CAPS SHIFT 1: PAUSE ON
CAPS SHIFT 2: PAUSE OFF
CAPS SHIFT 3: ABORT

MINITIP: on later stages it's best to smash any open windows first so the guards don't have time to stick their heads out.

FLASHBACK

Thanks for the fantastic response to the plea for older POKEs for this new section – there have been all of four letters! The section has somewhat grown this month with POKEs for *Chiller* and *Devils Crown* from Mastertronic, Ultimate's *Jetpac* and *Harrier Attack* from Durell. All of these were sent by Dave Stone **of Bridgwater.**

CHILLER

```
1  REM CHILLER HACK BY D STONE
10 CLEAR
   29900:LOAD"" CODE:LOAD"" CODE
20 POKE 34412,0:REM NO POISONOUS
   MUSHROOMS
30 RANDOMIZE USR 42664
```

DEVILS CROWN

```
1  REM DEVILS CROWN HACK BY
   D STONE
10 FOR N=23296 TO 1e9:READ A:IF
   A=999 THEN RANDOMIZE USR
   23296
20 POKE N,A:NEXT N
30 DATA 62, 255, 17, 0, 27, 221, 33, 0, 64,
   55, 205, 86, 5, 62, 255, 17, 192, 158,
   221, 33, 0, 93, 55, 205, 86, 5
40 DATA 62, 201, 50, 106, 230:REM INFI-
   NITE AIR
50 DATA 62, 195, 50, 38, 205:REM NO
   DARK ROOMS
60 DATA 195, 118, 204, 999:REM DATA
   END MARKER
```

JETPAC

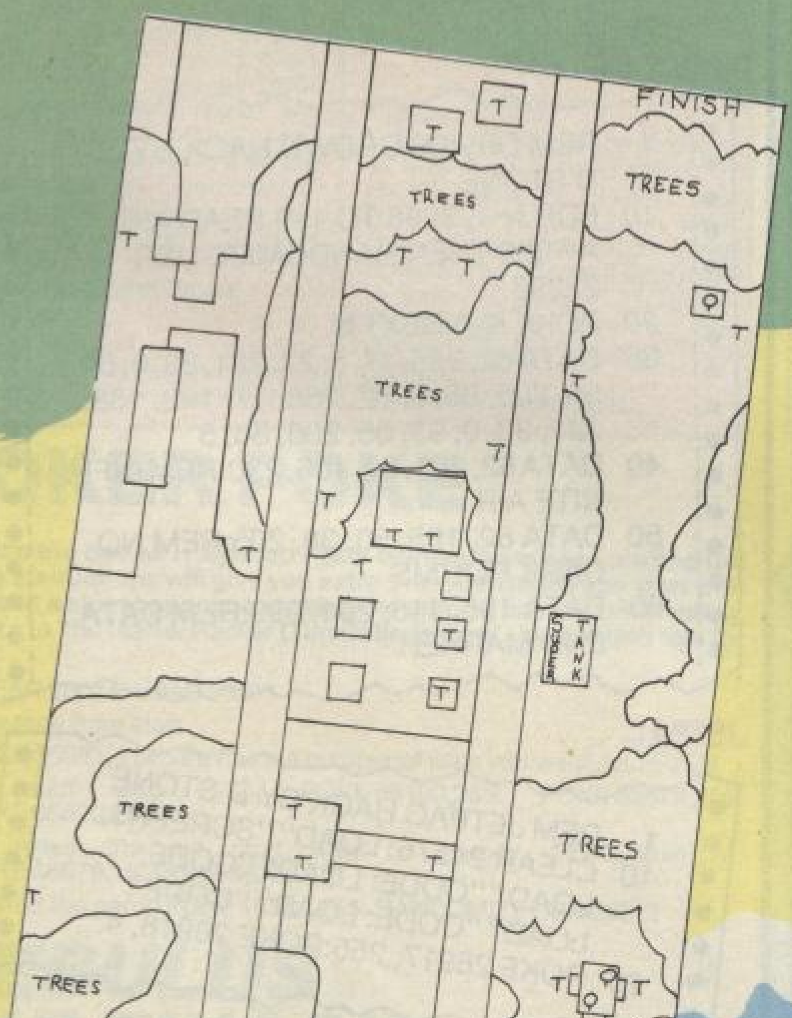
```
1  REM JETPAC HACK BY D STONE
10 CLEAR 24576: LOAD""SCREEN$:
   LOAD""CODE: LOAD""CODE:
   LOAD""CODE: LOAD""CODE
20 POKE 26917, 255:POKE 26918, 4
```

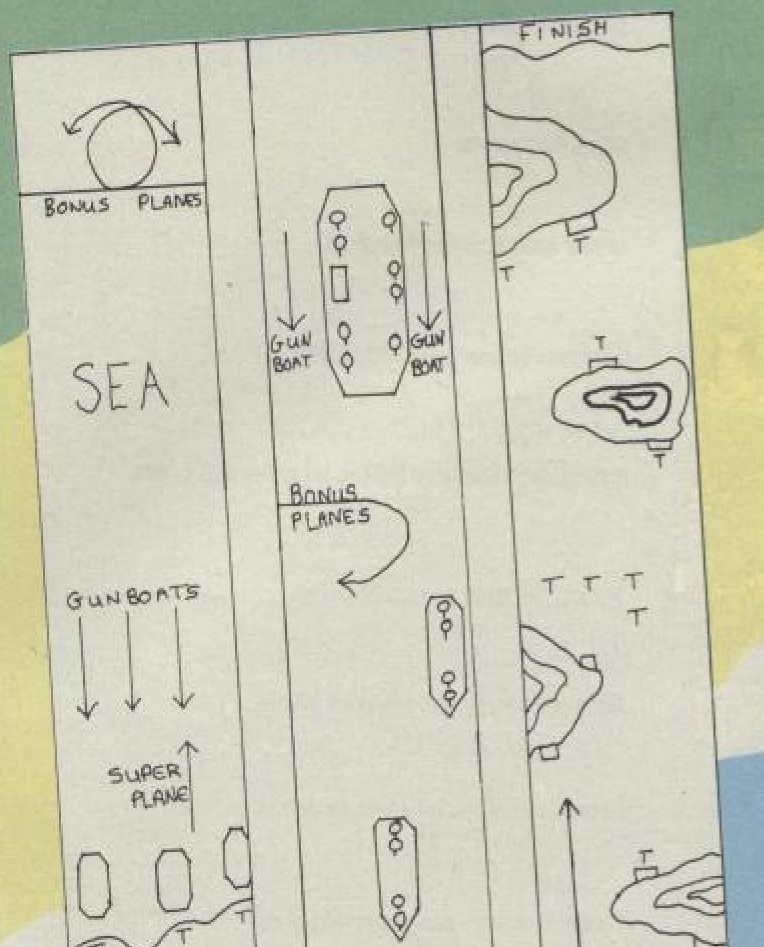
HARRIER ATTACK

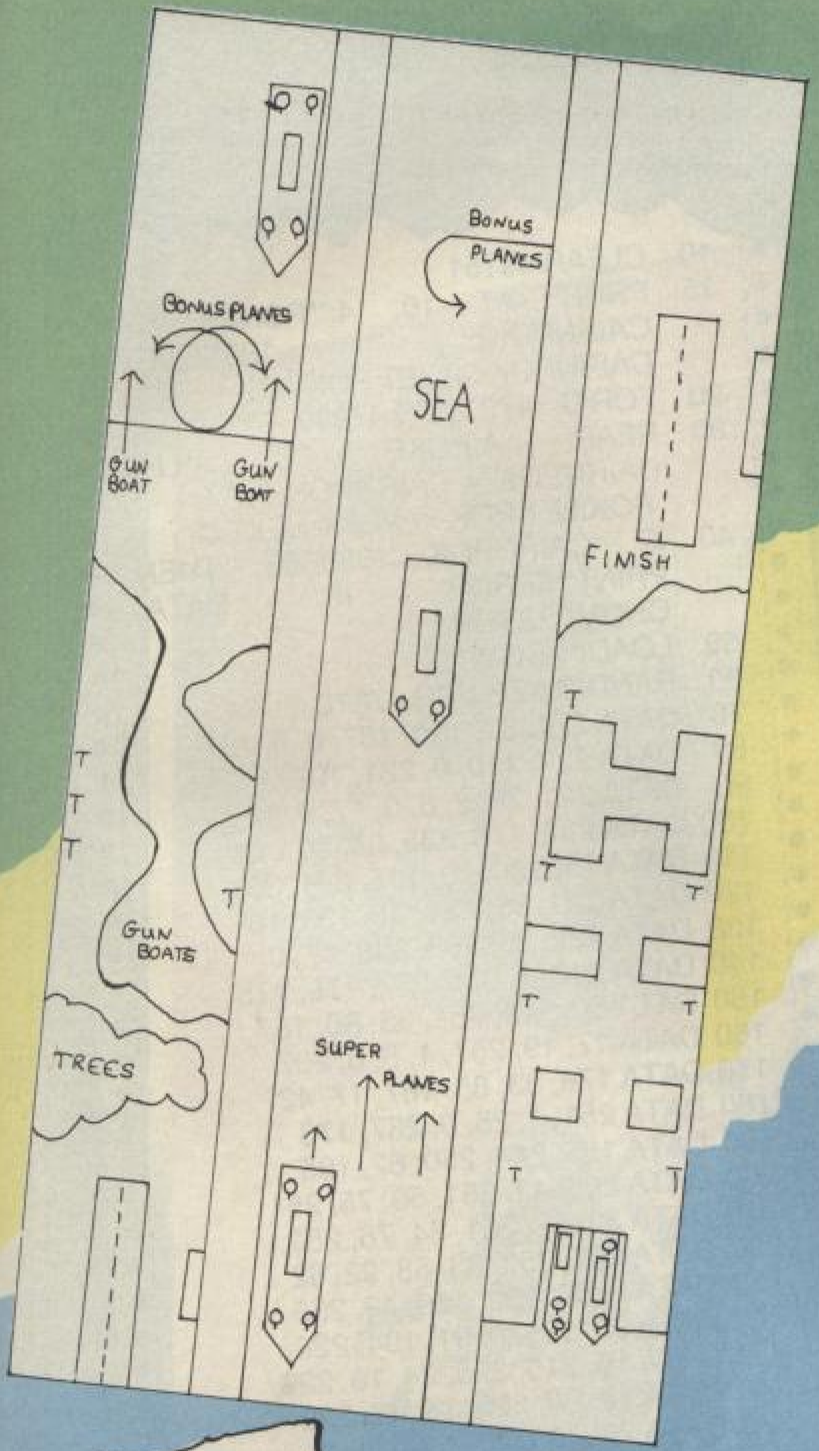
```
1  REM HARRIER ATTACK HACK BY
   D STONE
10 CLEAR 24575:LOAD""CODE:
   LOAD""CODE
20 POKE 27048, 201:REM NO FLAK
```

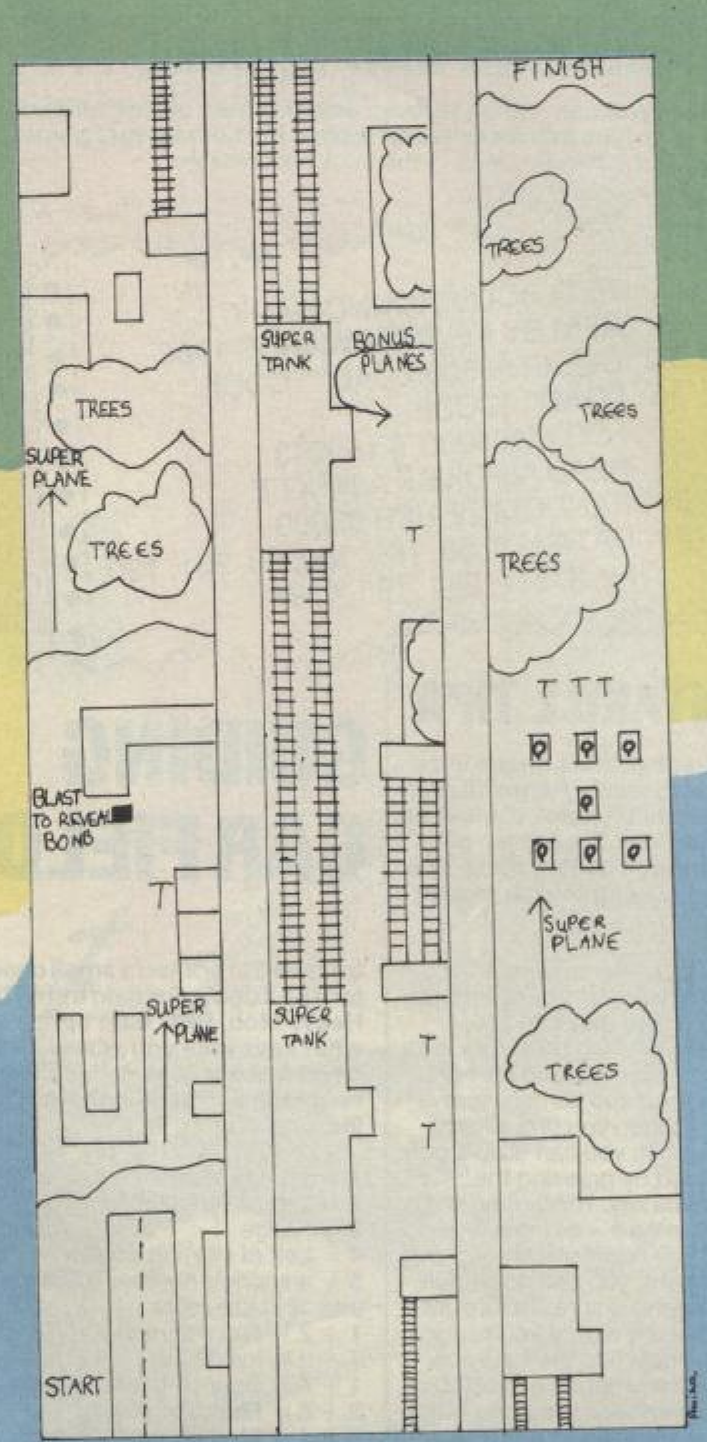
PLAYING TIPS SPECIAL

FLYING SHARK









T - TANK
♀ - GUN TURRET

LEVEL ONE

DON'T USE SMART BOMBS ON THE SUPER TANKS, AS IT CAN EASILY BE DESTROYED WITH A FEW WELL PLACED SHOTS. SHOOT PLANES AS SOON AS THEY COME ON THE SCREEN. TANKS TAKE SHOTS, TURRETS TAKE TEN.

LEVEL TWO

THE SUPER PLANE MUST BE BLASTED BEFORE IT GETS HALFWAY DOWN THE SCREEN ELSE IT UNLEASHES A BARRIAGE OF CROSS FIRE YOUR ONLY HOPE OF GETTING PAST THE AIRCRAFT CARRIER IS TO USE SMART BOMBS. ONE OF THE FAR TURRETS CONTAIN A BONUS BOMB TO COLLECT IT QUICKLY. TANKS COME OUT OF THE TUBES AT EITHER SIDE OF THE BUNKERS GUNBOATS TAKE TWO SHOTS TO DESTROY, SUPERS TAKE EIGHT.

LEVEL THREE

DON'T USE ALL YOUR SMART BOMBS EARLY ON AS YOU WILL NEED THEM LATER TO DESTROY THE TURRETS AT THE HARBOUR

LEVEL FOUR

THERE ARE SEVERAL STATIONARY TARGTS WHICH CAN BE BLASTED TO REVEAL SMART BOMBS, SUPER TANKS EMERGE FROM THE LARGE BUILDINGS AND CAN BE AVOIDED UNTIL THEY DISAPEAR INTO THE NEXT LARGE BUILDING. THEY WILL ABSORB UPTO THREE SMART BOMBS BEFORE DYING. THE GROUP OF SEVEN TURRETS NEED FOUR SMART BOMBS THERE IS ONE SMART BOMB UNDER THE FIRST TURRET. AFTER THE TURRETS THERE IS A FINAL OFFENSIVE OF TEN WAVES OF PLANES. YOU WON'T HAVE ANY SMART BOMBS LEFT SO JUST FIRE AND PRAY. ONCE THIS FINAL LEVEL IS COMPLETED THE GAME LOOPS BACK TO LEVEL TWO.

```
10 REM FLYING SHARK HACK
20 REM HOWDON HACKERS '88
30 REM INFINITE LIVES
40 LET T=403509: LET W=85
50 FOR F=45000 TO 45083
60 READ A: POKE F,A
70 LET T=T-W*A: LET W=W-1
80 NEXT F
90 IF T<>0 THEN PRINT "DATA ERROR!":
   STOP
100 LOAD ""CODE
110 RANDOMIZE USR 45000
120 DATA 195,252,175,50,21,255
130 DATA 122,254,46,192,62,50
140 DATA 50,84,205,33,21,255
150 DATA 34,85,205,62,195,50
160 DATA 58,91,33,235,175,34
170 DATA 59,91,195,0,91,50,107
180 DATA 92,33,13,176,17,172
190 DATA 91,1,15,0,237,176
200 DATA 195,61,91,49,112,148
210 DATA 62,205,50,84,205,33
220 DATA 203,175,34,85,205,195
230 DATA 0,205,33,0,0,34,14
240 DATA 236,34,191,212,195
250 DATA 58,158,127,72,72
```

ROLLAROUND AND AROUND . . .

Yes, now you can roll on forever with the help of this routine which gives you infinite time and lives in the cute budget game *Rollaround.* Kevin Edwards **is the man responsible.**

```
5  REM ROLLAROUND HACK
6  REM BY KEVIN EDWARDS 1988
10 CLEAR 65500:LOAD""CODE
15 LOAD""CODE
20 FOR F½65030 TO 65043
25 READ A:POKE F,A:NEXT F
30 RANDOMIZE USR 65000
35 DATA 175, 50, 180, 120, 50, 221, 120,
   62, 6, 211, 254, 195, 0, 91
```

RENTAKILL TIPA

As the instructions on the inlay of Mastertronic's *Rentakill Rita* aren't all that helpful, it's just as well that Robin Thompson **of Southampton sent in these tips to make playing the game a bit easier.**

First of all, killing spiders is fairly straightforward: all you do is guide them to where they can be squashed. Getting rid of flies is more complicated, and it's here that the food and aerosol sprays come in. When you find a room with a fly in it, you can drop a portion of food by pressing the appropriate key. The fly than starts to home in on it – as most flies do – and if you hang around until the last moment, you should be able to zap it with the spray before getting out of the way. If you're successful, you'll find the fly is now paralysed and can be picked up or pushed and taken to a place where it can be squashed.

The object of the game is to kill enough spiders and flies to be able to get through to the end-game and confront the villain who infested the mansion in the first place. In the end-game, play is slightly different: here you no longer need to squash anything, instead you find your energy is draining away and you need to eat the food you carry to survive. So, it's a race against time to keep your food supplies up and get though to the criminal mastermind.

There are 19 insects to be got in all, although you can get through to the end-game after killing only 12. Beware though, the rate that your food goes down depends on how many things got squashed. The more insects you get, the longer your food lasts . . . To get into it, go back to the start room and jump on the teleport pad.

If you want to do a bit a cheating with a Multiface **POKE 61170,1** (after killing just one insect) gets you to the end-game and you find your food lasts an incredibly long time.

GUIDING GAR FIELD

In issue 51 I printed a small cheat for The Edge's *Garfield* from The Heavy Mob. But I didn't print what keys take you where. But never fret because Robin 'Blumf' Balmforth **has sent in the whole lot.**

1 = Start Screen
2 = Left of Jon's table
3 = Fridge
4 = Left of starting screen
5 + any single number = Different places in the cellar
1 + 2 = Jon's screen
1 + 3 = Inside TV
1 + 4 = Bouncing rubber bone
2 + 3 = Menu Screen
2 + 4 = Mailbox next to Jon's house
3 + 4 = Outside TV
1 + 2 + 3 = Left of screen with aniseed balls
1+ 2 +4=Chair, stool and warm blanket
2+ 3 + 4 = Above cellar in the house
3+ 4 + 5 = Left of shed
1+ 2 + 3 + 4 = Cellar with rat and chest
1+ 3 + 4 + 5 = Shed
1+ 2 + 4 + 5 = Bin and tin can
2+ 3 + 4 + 5 = In back of Jon's house
Y = Park
Y + 1 = Mailbox near back of Jon's house
Y + 2 = Outside back of Jon's house
Y + 3 = Outside butchers
Y + 4 = Left of health food shop
Y + 5 = Left of butchers
Y + 2 + 5 = Outside city pound
Y + 2 + 1 = Outside health food shop
Y + 2 + 3 = Right of health food shop
Y + I + 2 + 3 = Inside butchers
Y + 5 + I = COMPLETES THE GAME!

RUNNING THE ROAD

This is the only POKE routine from Cairnpoke **which I haven't printed, but I'm sure they will soon swamp me with another load. This one gives infinite energy and stops the clock in *Road Runner.***

```
10  CLEAR 49151
15  PRINT AT 10, 4;"POKES BY
    CAIRNPOKE 1987":LET
    CAIRNPOK=0:LET POK=0
20  FOR C=47872 TO 47999
30  READ A:POKE C, A:LET
    CAIRNPOK = CAIRNPOK + A *
    POK:LET POK = POK1:NEXT C
40  IF CAIRNPOK<>930680 THEN
    PRINT"ERROR IN DATA,
    CHUM!":STOP
50  LOAD""CODE
60  RANDOMIZE USR 47872
70  DATA 221, 33, 110, 187, 6, 6, 197
80  DATA 221, 110, 0, 221, 102, 1
90  DATA 221, 78, 2, 6, 0, 17, 0, 125
100 DATA 237, 176, 235, 54, 201, 30
110 DATA 150, 205, 0, 125, 221, 35
120 DATA 221, 35, 221, 35, 193, 16
130 DATA 222, 33, 103, 238, 17, 0
140 DATA 248, 1, 0, 4, 237, 176, 175
150 DATA 50, 114, 251, 33, 80, 187
160 DATA 17, 19, 251, 1, 5, 0, 237
170 DATA 176, 33, 85, 187, 17, 42
180 DATA 251, 1, 25, 0, 237, 176
190 DATA 195, 244, 250, 62, 195
200 DATA 205, 42, 251, 50, 75, 251
210 DATA 33, 52, 251, 34, 76, 251
220 DATA 201, 253, 33, 58, 92, 62
230 DATA 0, 50, 102, 159, 49, 255
240 DATA 95, 195, 0, 91, 194, 228
250 DATA 16, 210, 228, 24, 16, 229
260 DATA 12, 28, 229, 14, 42, 229
270 DATA 25, 78, 229, 11
```

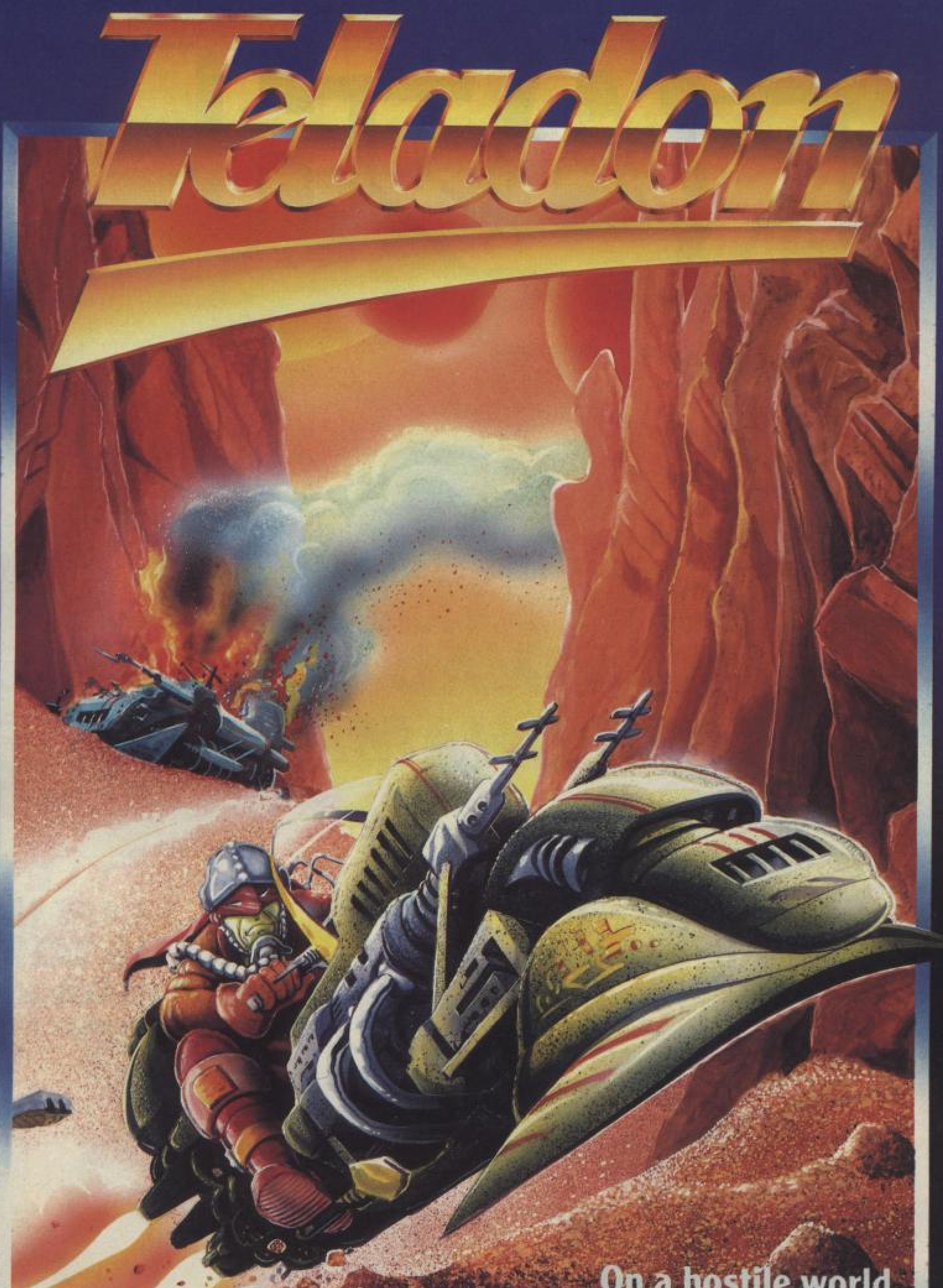
GETTING EDITORIAL

Remember Paul Wells, **the man behind the** Motos **editor in Issue 46? Well, this time he's got an editor for Atlantis's** Survivors **(70% in Issue 37).**

For your copy, write to: Paul Wells, Survivors **Editor,** 14 Whiteways Drive, Sheffield S4 8ET. **And don't forget to enclose a nice shiny £1 coin to cover the tape and postage.**

What I want to know is: when are we going to receive a good CRASH editor for you to make your own pages in CRASH?

I hope you enjoyed this extra special Tips Bonanza because it took ages to put together and I'd be upset if you didn't. Don't forget that all the competitions are still open, so if you're designing a map or hacking a game at this very moment, don't stop. Playing Tips will be back next month with more POKEs, tips and maps than you can possibly cope with in one go – so send all your work to: NICHOLAS 'Cheeky' ROBERTS, PLAYING TIPS, CRASH, *PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 1DB*



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CRASH

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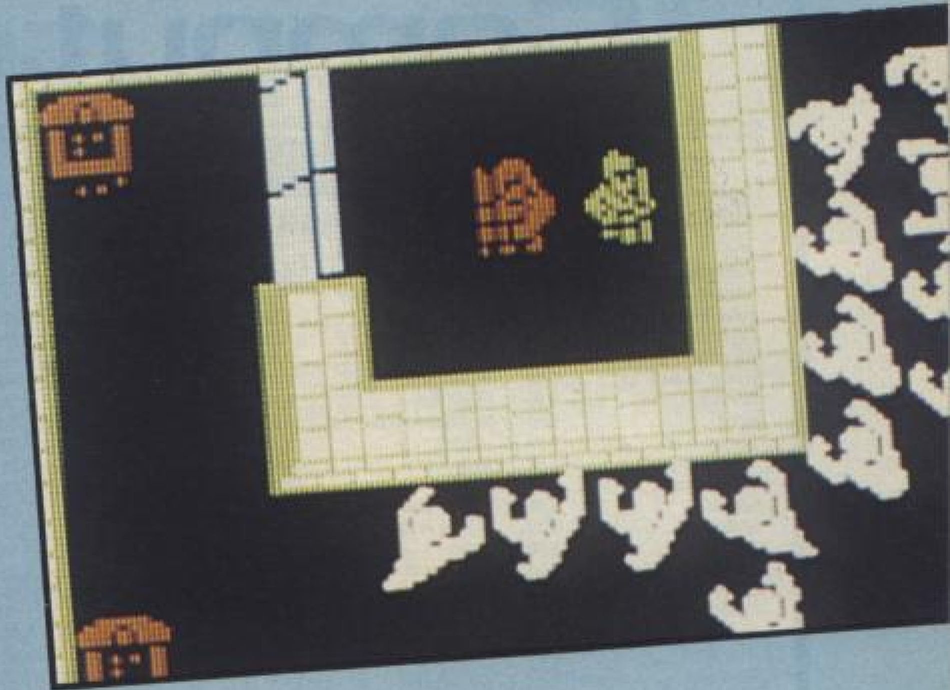
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Fill in the coupon now – loads of ZZAP! readers are doing the same! Closing date for entries is May 23.



VENUES

For all the fine print detailing entry rules and controlling regulations of this exciting championship, see last month's ZZAP! We now have details of the six first-round venues:

(Midlands)	**BIRMINGHAM SPORTS CENTRE** 201 Balsall Heath Road Highgate Birmingham B29 9DL
(SW/Wales)	**NAILSWORTH BOYS CLUB** Bath Road Nailsworth, Nr Stroud Gloucestershire
(N. Ireland)	**SEALINK FERRY 'ST DAVID'** LARNE - STRANRAER (full details will be supplied to selected contestants)
(Scotland)	**FETTE-LORRE BOYS CLUB** Orchard Brae Edinburgh
(North)	**HUNSLET BOYS CLUB** Hillidge Road Leeds LS10 1BP
(London/SE)	**ST ANDREWS BOYS CLUB** 12 Old Pye Street Westminster London SW1

All days are Saturdays – start times are 10.00am except the Sealink Ferry 'St David'. Selected competitors will be notified in plenty of time.

NATIONAL COMPUTER GAMES CHAMPIONSHIP ENTRY FORM

Please write clearly, using block capitals.

I wish to put my name forward to qualify as a competitor. If selected to compete, I agree to abide by the championship regulations.

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Address ....

....

.... Postcode ....

Telephone ....

Please tick the appropriate box:

I wish to compete on the Spectrum: ☐

I wish to compete on the Commodore: ☐

I am aged 18 or over: ☐

I am aged under 18: ☐ If you are under 18, your parent or legal guardian must sign here and print their name below:

Parent's Signature ....

Parent's Name ....

Please tick the regional heat venue you would like to attend

- ☐ Birmingham
- ☐ Gloucester
- ☐ Belfast (Larne-Stranraer Ferry)
- ☐ Edinburgh
- ☐ Leeds
- ☐ London

In case for any reason you are asked to attend a venue other than the one you have already selected, please tick the next best alternative for you:

- ☐ Birmingham
- ☐ Gloucester
- ☐ Belfast
- ☐ Edinburgh
- ☐ Leeds
- ☐ London

In order to help us determine whether you should qualify to enter, please give **EITHER** your high score on **two** of the following five US Gold games:

OUT RUN high score is: ....

INDIANA JONES high score is: ....

720° high score is: ....

GAUNTLET II high score is: ....

RYGAR high score is: ....

OR your best score on two of your favourite arcade coin-op machines:

1 Coin-op name is: .... high score is: ....

2 Coin-op name is: .... high score is: ....

Complete the form and send it to **THE ORGANISER, NATIONAL COMPUTER GAMES CHAMPIONSHIP, NEWSFIELD LIMITED, PO BOX 20, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 1DB.** Successful applicants will be contacted in plenty of time. Please do not ring or write to ask, it only blocks up the phone lines! And good luck!

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TECH NICHE



IN A DARKENED CORNER of the Bates Motel office lies a tottering pile of letters. Yes, it's time for Batesy to answer the readers mail . . .

MUSIC FROM THE MASSES

MANY thanks to you all for the tunes and cassettes. They all get played, but you stand a better chance of getting them heard if you send in a data cassette and not a listing as it's rather time consuming to type in hand-written programs – you'll also stand a better chance of getting a reply with an SAE. If you didn't get a reply then more than likely you didn't put one in or you got the envelopes the wrong way round and mailed the letter to yourself!

OK, so you didn't send me a letter; some of this could well be relevant to you anyway. If you sent in a letter some time ago then the reason for the lack of response is that some of the articles were put back owing the Tech Tips Special in March. Enough excuses, on with the tips – Foreign Department; 'And a warm welcome to our overseas readers', as they say. First off is **Paul Skinner** from the Antipodes (well, New Zealand) who is having a major problem with his Cheetah Midi Interface program. It seems that if he writes a bar in step or real-time and copies or appends this in any way at all, then it adds a delay which is the visual equivalent of one pixel space on the screen in the step-time editor. This is not much fun as it renders a fair amount of the facilities null and void as regards creating riffs and patterns that will repeat and synchronise. I tried this out and lo and behold I found the same problem. This is probably down to both of us having very early versions of the software. I found that you can get round it by avoiding the Copy and Append functions and using instead the Merge and Quit functions – like this:

1) Record on track 1, verse A
2) Merge and quit
3) Record on track 2 verse A – BUT DON'T PLAY ANYTHING!! The original sequence will still play away.
4) Merge and quit
5) Arrange the song so that both play back together. The result should be that both sequences will play back together in perfect time. You can assign MIDI channels and tracks and they should now all be in sync. Hope this gets some of you out of trouble.

From Holland, **O. van der Valden** wants to know about the 128 and the MIDI interface, via the RS232 port. As I have mentioned before, the MIDI addition to the 128 is a bit of a lash-up to say the least and what's more, Amstrad have done zilch about it. C'mon lads, a couple of built-in MIDI ports would certainly help out and give us some pretty cheap software and sequencing. Anyway, the RS232 to MIDI connections are like this: looking at the 128 endways on, the RS232 pins are numbered 1 to 5 from left to right. Connect pins 1 and 5 to pins 4 and 5 on the MIDI 5 pin din plug and that should do the trick (covered in issue Number 28, May 1986).

Now the MIDI out is at a different baud rate to the RS232 and as far as I am aware there is no provision for the 128 to convert MIDI IN rate to something that makes sense to the Spectrum. So this explains why there aren't lots of MIDI software packages using this port.

Lincoln Spiteri from Malta has a Cheetah MKV – and not a lot else! He's thinking of buying a low budget tone module when he comes to England, and has £250 to spend. OK; I guess it's a straight choice of a Yamaha FB01 with eight MIDI channels to go at (covered in issue 42) and the Casio CZ 101 synth (issues too numerous to mention!!). But you'll have to buy a few music magazines and do some price comparisons since some dealers have special offers. However, keep your eyes open on these pages as we have plans for a special feature comparing and contrasting synths and tone modules at affordable prices coming up sometime towards mid-summer.

Meanwhile, back home . . . Several people have written in over the past few months regarding the electronic drum kit that was pictured way back in December. Well it's called the DP5, marketed by Cheetah, priced at £160 and which requires a separate drum module for it to work. This will set you back a further £150 for their MD8. Problem is that it's not velocity sensing, but as Simon Goodwin remarked at the time, 'You always hit things as hard as possible'.

However, at the last check they are fairly thin on the showroom floor at present (I have engaged Nag Factor 9 with the aforementioned company as they have been advertising keyboards and modules a-plenty for some time but none seem to be available!).

Hands up all CZ 101 (1000) owners who have failed to engage mono mode. Judging from the mail and other sources, there are quite a few of you – not the least **Bill Masters** from Stockton who has written with a plea for a step-by-step 'Dingbats Guide'. OK: in brief, Casio have made life a bit difficult by arranging it so that the voices must be set on adjacent channels. When you press the 'solo' button the titchy liquid crystal display reads 'MIDI CH=01, VO=01, PROG CHANGE=ENA'. This shows the voice selected for the first channel.

Casio have a system whereby you select a base MIDI channel – here it's channel one – and the next three adjacent channels make up the four separate MIDI channels. When it arrives it's factory-set so that voice one is on channel one, voice two is on channel two, and so on. By stepping through the VO figures, you can choose a voice for each of the four channels. The only limitation is that the MIDI channels are always next door to one another: 1, 2, 3, 4 or 2, 3, 4, 5 or 3, 4, 5, 6 and so on.

By the way, if you make the voice changes whilst recording on a sequencer it will remember them and change the voice for the appropriate channel on playback – pretty smart, huh?

Whilst on the Casio trail, **Martin Toner** from Sheffield has the rather excellent CZ 230. This is a single keyboard with drum and bass lines, but with a pretty decent set of preprogrammed voices (another one for the keyboard feature!). All the departments are accessible via MIDI and some of the voices can be reprogrammed. So how do you do it? Well, so far my spies tell me that you would need a Casio CZ editing program and since you have a Ram Music Machine I suggest that you (and other interested parties) contact Quaser Software at *83 Clerkenwell Road, London EC1*, Tel 01-987 3906, as they are about to release such an editor. I'm fairly certain that you cannot transfer sounds directly from a CZ 101 as there is no voice send/dump command accessible on either instrument from the buttons on the synth.

Quaser have lots of other goodies on-line including Yamaha, Roland and Ensonique voice editors, Lyric Sheet makers, Effects processors and a 'toolkit' for the Music Machine which gives you lots of pokes and file management/transposer facilities. A review of their DX 100/21/27 voice editor will be featured in next month's column.

Martin also wants to know if the Music Machine will capture the pitch bend data. The simple answer is not in its usual state. It's only programmed to respond to note information and so it chooses to ignore everything else – however the update of Ramtrack (reviewed in issue 46) promises to do just that. As soon as I get a review copy, all will be revealed.

Finally, the Musonic Fanzine is apparently up and running and available from Azteq Publications, *34 Kingston Road, Romford, Essex RM1 3NB*. I would suggest that you write to them either with contribution or applications for the fanzine which is available on either tape or paper.

That's all we've got space for this month. Next month sees a review of the DX editor from Quaser, a simple sampler program that requires no extra software plus more tips in response to your letters. Oh yes; I'll be assessing all the tunes you've sent in and maybe have some sort of prize-giving for the best one. You send 'em in – I'll listen and read between cleaning up the shower . . .



This month SIMON N GOODWIN delves into the +3 ROM and disk system, reveals secret machine-code instructions, and reports on the CRASH Tech Tape and MGT's SAM.

ZIPZAP PAZAZZ

+3 ZIPZAP

THE promised version of CP/M for the Spectrum +3 is still apparently waiting in the wings at Locomotive Software. They keep saying 'soon', so I hope to be able to review it next month.

In the meantime I've spent a while looking at *ZipZap*, a +3 disk utility that should appeal to hackers and regular disk users.

ZipZap, from Omega Software, is a disk sector editor – a program that lets you read and edit the raw information recorded on a +3 disk. This is useful if you want to edit programs or header information without loading files into memory – perhaps to change the starting line number on a BASIC file, or to patch text or code.

ZipZap can be even more useful if something goes wrong with a disk – should you erase a file accidentally, or a mechanical fault wipes out part of a file, for instance. In the first case, as long as you have not written anything new to the disk you can retrieve the data by just changing a few characters in the index or 'directory' the disk uses to keep track of files.

In the second case you've probably lost the data that's on the physically damaged part of the disk, but you can usually retrieve most of the file by changing the directory entry so that the computer skips over the damaged part.

DISK ORGANISATION

ZipZap can read any part of any disk produced by +3 DOS. It doesn't load or save files in the usual way, but instead works with the individual lumps of information on the disk, known as sectors.

The data on a +3 disk is spread over 40 rings, or 'tracks', each a fraction of a millimetre wide. The disk head – the part that reads and writes data – steps back and forth from track to track, so that any ring on the disk can be accessed.

Each track is divided up into nine sectors, each of 512 characters, and sectors are allocated in pairs to each file. As files grow they are allocated new sectors, and a 'directory' is written on the outside of the disk to keep track of which sectors belong to each file.

There's no necessary connection between the order of sectors on the disk and their apparent order when you load a file, although it's rare for a file to be scattered all over a disk – the Amstrad software, +3 DOS, just doles out sectors from the unused ones as required, and re-uses sectors when a file has been deleted and its space is needed.

The system reads a particular sector by moving to the appropriate track and reading the sector numbers, recorded before each lump of data, until it finds the sector it wants. The disk turns at 300 RPM, so there's not usually long to wait.

ZipZap lets you drive the disk head around and grab sectors by number or at random as they come off a particular track. You can then print, display, edit or replace the sector. Standard disks use sector numbers from 0 to 8, but 'protected' disks tend to use higher numbers that can only be read with special software.

Other protection schemes use a mixture of single and double-density recording. *ZipZap* can read and write these, although it takes a fair amount of fiddling around to write single-density tracks.

You can read most types of protected disk with *ZipZap*, but the utility relies on the +3 DOS ROM routines, so it can't read all recordings generated by programs that manipulate the disk controller directly. *ZipZap* itself was protected when it was launched, but I've since persuaded Omega Software to remove the protection.

At the moment, commercial programs use +3 DOS routines because direct control is a fiddly and error-prone business. It's fair to assume that *ZipZap* will read the vast majority of +3 disks, including anything you format yourself, but it's not guaranteed to read absolutely everything.

GET DIRECT

ZipZap uses a fixed display format. The top part of the screen shows the current quarter sector, with 128 bytes of data arranged in two sections. The left side shows hexadecimal data values, and the right side shows text.

You can edit either part by moving a cursor over the data. There's no shortage of commands to move around the screen, memory or disk surface – you'll probably end up using just a subset of the available commands.

The lower third of the screen shows the current drive, track, sector, memory address and cursor position. It's also the place where messages appear.

ZipZap is controlled with single keys, sometimes used in conjuction with Symbol shift. The 'Z' key gives a three page list of the 49 controls, with single-line explanations of their effects.

Numeric values must be entered in hex – base 16. Most machine code programmers will be happy with hex input – personally, I hate it – but the rest of us just have to get used to 1F being one less than 20, or 32 as we know it in decimal! *ZipZap* includes a command to convert hex values to decimal, but not vice versa.

Hex makes for a neat display, as every value can be written in two 'digits', 00-FF, rather than three (000-255) in decimal, so perhaps it's worth the hassle. Nonetheless, the Spectrum cannot display enough standard-sized characters to show a complete sector on the screen at one time, so each sector is shown in four quarters, with a code letter A to D to identify each part.

ZipZap can read and write sectors into a 'buffer' of 512 bytes of memory. The top 32K of RAM is reserved for 64 of these buffers, so you can build up files in RAM and edit them with POKEs from BASIC, if that's what turns you on – you can leave *ZipZap* at any time without losing data, although there's only about 2K left for ZX BASIC.

You can change buffers by pressing 'B' followed by the buffer number in hex, or just use 'E' to Exchange between an odd and even numbered sector – convenient when editing one buffer and keeping the directory in another. Buffer contents can be edited just like disk sectors.

The 'P' key sends the sector on the screen to a serial or Centronics printer, using a double-width format to save paper.

Key 'S' controls a useful search option which scans the disk or memory for a given sequence of up to six characters. Unfortunately you have to enter these by character code, in hex. Searches in RAM are very fast, but disk access is slowed by +3 DOS. It takes about three minutes to search through an entire 180K disk, but you can stop the search at any time by pressing BREAK.

DISK PACK

ZipZap costs £12.95 on 3 inch disk, with an A4 manual and a 'bonus' in the shape of a rudimentary but useful utility program: *SuperCat* lets you check the exact size and SAVE parameters of files, rather like the tape command CAT "T:".

The *ZipZap* documentation is well written as far as it goes, but that's not really as far as I would like. It's heavy going for a beginner, as it assumes you've read and understood most of the disk information in the +3 DOS manual, but it contains enough examples to get you started.

The program is fairly easy to use once you've worked out how to read the directory and track files down on the disk, but it works more like a hexadecimal spreadsheet than a friendly, menu-driven utility. The first version I was sent for review reported errors by number, but the latest one prints full messages, using the normal Amstrad text.

ZipZap is a very useful tool, but it takes a while to get used to it unless you've used a disk sector editor before. You may find using it an uphill struggle if you're easily phased by screenfuls of numbers, but it's worth persevering. Omega Software can be contracted on 0932 228649, or by post at *PO Box 21, Shepperton, Middlesex TW17 8BY.*

Z80 SECRETS

Over the years I've had several letters from readers asking about the 'undocumented' instructions rumoured to be recognised by the Z80 processor in all models of the Spectrum.

Microprocessors work by reading numbers from memory and performing different actions depending upon the exact values, known as 'op-codes', which they find. 'Op' is short for 'operation'. Each code causes the chip to perform a distinct operation on values in memory or inside the processor.

According to Zilog, the firm that first made the Z80, the Spectrum processor can recognise 696 different op-codes. After some research I've identified about a hundred extra operations that the processor will recognise, but which Zilog chose to keep secret!

There are various possible explanations for the secrecy. Some of the 'new' instructions are not very useful. Others conflict with the way Zilog expected the Z80 to be used – they work fine, but make the processor even more fiddly to program than it normally is. A few op-codes appear to work by accident – they're recognised by all genuine Z80 processors, but they only work as side-effect of other instructions.

To understand more you need to do some detective work, and examine the actual instruction code. At this point I'm afraid I'll have to wave goodbye to anyone who does not already have a reasonable knowledge of machine-code – it would take most of this issue of CRASH to explain this from first principles. If you want to learn about machine code, try Toni Baker's book *Mastering Machine Code on the ZX Spectrum*, published by Interface.

Z80 DESIGN

The Z80 instruction set is a souped-up version of the set recognised by the Intel 8080, one of the earliest useful microprocessors. The 8080 recognised 250 instruction, as it used most of the possible values for a single-byte op-code.

Zilog designers left Intel and added hundreds of extra instructions by making special use of the unused 8080 op-code 203 – CB is hexadecimal. This code was declared to be a marker, indicating that the next byte was the op-code of a special Z80 instruction.

The new instructions required two bytes of op-code, unlike the 8080 instructions which could get by with one byte. All the short 8080 instructions still worked, and Zilog got lots of extra op-codes to play with, at the cost of longer, slower instructions.

In theory this trick should have given Zilog an extra 256 op-codes. In fact, when you look through the list of instructions and character codes printed in all Spectrum manuals apart from the trashy Spectrum + booklet, you'll see a curious gap in the second column of instructions.

According to the manual, you get a valid Z80 instruction if you follow a 203 byte with any value EXCEPT a byte in the range from 48 to 55. There's no hint of what happens if you use these eight combinations.

MISSING IN ACTION

When you examine the other instructions listed you soon notice that they're arranged in groups of eight. Each group of instructions works similarly, but individual instructions in each group affect different registers. The first in each group handles register B, then C, D, E, H, L, (HL) and finally A. So it's a good bet that the missing codes follow the same pattern.

Before the missing instructions come various op-codes that shift binary values sideways. There's an arithmetic shift left, then an arithmetic shift right, then the gap, followed by a logical shift right. It seems very likely that the missing instructions were meant to perform a logical shift left.

When you try it, you discover that the instructions DO shift binary values to the left, in the registers you'd expect. But the rightmost bit is always SET after the shift, whereas you'd expect a logical shift to leave it clear. This is not the conventional result, and presumably that's why Zilog chose to keep the instructions secret.

Now that you know what the instructions do, you can use them in your own programs. They have the effect of doubling the value in a particular register and adding one to the answer. It's unlikely that you'll often find this useful, except perhaps in serial data-handling routines, but at least now you know that you can do it!

There are a couple more instructions in the same vein. Zilog use two more marker values, 221 and 253, to indicate that the following instruction, which would normally use the HL register pair, should use the new Z80 registers IX or IY instead.

Zilog markers sometimes work in combination, so if you put the sequence of bytes: 221, 203, 54 in your program you can Shift Left Logical the byte pointed to by IX. This is an indexed operation, so a single byte offset from IX should come at the end of the instruction, after the 54.

The offset is stored just as in the instruction LD B,(IY+34), which uses 70, the code for LD B,(HL), with a 253 in front to select IY, and the offset 34 at the end, making the whole instruction: 253, 70, 34.

MARK 2 EXTRAS

Now you know about the markers for IX and IY, another idea may cross your mind. If these values tell the processor to use IX or IY instead of HL, what do they do if you put them in front of the 8080 instructions which don't use HL?

Before the Spectrum was invented I used to write for a magazine called *Computing Today*, now defunct. One of the contributors, D S Peckett, discovered that the 221 and 253 markers for IX and IY could be used in front of instructions meant to work on the eight-bit registers H and L.

In February 1981 Peckett reported that the op-code 124, normally used to load A with H, would load A with the top eight bits from register IX instead, if it was preceeded by a 221 byte. Similarly, the bytes 253, 124 loaded A with the high byte of IY.

According to Zilog, IX and IY are fixed-purpose 16-bit registers. In fact they're just duplicates of HL, and each index register can be used in two eight bit halves, as well as a 16 bit pointer. That means you can have an extra pair of eight bit registers instead of each index register, if you want them – and most assembler programmers want as many registers as they can get!

You can generate 88 undocumented but reliable instructions by prefixing single-byte 8080 op-codes with 221 or 253. This only works with 8080 codes – not with the eight-bit register instructions unique to the Z80, like BIT, SET, SLA and so on.

You can't mix index registers with HL in the same instruction, so 221 (select IX) followed by 108 (LD L,H) loads IXL with IXH, rather than L with IXH or IXL with H. This isn't much of a surprise, as the prefix seems to switch HL off and replace it with IX for the duration of the next instruction.

I'm sure there are other secret and useful instructions in the Z80, but those are the only ones I've come across. Most assemblers will reject the non-standard mnemonics I've used – you'll have to enter the instructions as byte values.

The *Picturesque Editor Assembler*, recently repackaged as *The Code Machine* by Discovery (0742 753423) lets you use all these instructions in your programs. It uses the mnemonic SLL for the new shift instructions, and calls the index register sections IXL, IXH, IYL and IYH.

Unfortunately *The Code Machine* monitor program doesn't disassemble the instructions correctly. You may come across some of these op-codes in routines like *Speedlok*, which are designed to be hard to hack.

OPERAND BYTES CODE

The Z80 has a few other secrets. Almost a decade ago a hacker called Adrian Kennard realised that it's possible to write Z80 instructions that execute their own operands, making them very hard to disassemble!

The four conditional relative jumps test the flags and then treat the values of the next byte as an offset to the next instruction to be executed if the condition is true. The offset is relative to the address after the conditional jump. So an offset of minus one has the logical but bizarre effect of sending the computer back one byte, so that it re-reads the offset, this time treating it as an instruction.

It just so happens that the value minus one is the op-code of a single byte instruction, RST 56 – so this special case of the conditional jump creates a new two-byte instruction, a conditional restart! On the Spectrum, RST 56 is used to scan the keyboard and update the software clock.

MORE PORT?

The In A,(C) instruction actually works as IN A,(BC), and is used as such by the Spectrum ROM. In other words, the value of B is written to the top eight bits of the address bus during IN instructions that use a port number in register C. Similarly, IN A,(N) puts the old value of A on lines A8 to A15, while the eight-bit port number appears on A0 to A7.

+3 PORT FAULT

Graeme Walton has written in with further information about quirks and incompatibilities of the Spectrum +3, and at last I've got hold of some detailed technical information about the design changes in the machine.

In the Christmas Special I listed some of the bugs in the +3 ROM. The problems were serious, and explained why some programs lack sound and others fail when the COPY command is used. However they didn't explain why some games 'lock up' when you run them on a +3, even though they work fine on any earlier model of the Spectrum.

Graeme has discovered that *Arkanoid*, *Short Circuit* and *Top Gun* all use code which reads information from an undocumented port in the Spectrum's logic array. The programs contain loops which read from port 10495 – part of the original Spectrum ULA – and wait for particular values. In fact you can get the same effect by reading port 255, as the top eight bits of the port number are ignored.

The Sinclair-designed Spectrums – including the original Amstrad +2, which was essentially a Sinclair 128 in a new box – have regularly changing values at port 10495.

The value is the current attribute being written to the TV, and corresponds exactly to the number you'd read with the ATTR function. Programmers use this value to divide up the frame time evenly between several different tasks, and soak up time by waiting for it to change. The value is 255 while the border is drawn.

Unfortunately, Amstrad didn't know about this port, and the value sticks at 255 on a +3. Switching into 48K BASIC doesn't help, because it doesn't change the hardware.

I have never seen the workings of this port documented, so I'm not surprised that Amstrad missed it out from the +3. Even so, it's another important incompatibility in a computer with a lot of problems, and it's hard to see how software producers will be able to get some programs working without such a facility to synchronise the code and the display.

I haven't got any of the games affected by the +3 fault, so I can't try commenting out the loop. In theory that will make the games work, but it is likely to give a flickering display and an unpredictable running speed. A delay loop may be better, but will probably still cause a lot of flicker. ▶

If you know or can find out more, please write in.

I've discussed this quirk with MGT, developers of the SAM SuperSpectrum, and they assure me that their machine lets you read the current attribute value from the port, just as on a Sinclair Spectrum.

They've just tied up a deal with a large semiconductor manufacturer which will produce their logic array and ensure supplies of scarce RAM chips later in the year – so the SAM development should not be hit by the chip shortages which have affected other manufacturers.

HIDDEN UTILITIES

When the +3 came out last year I explained how you could access a 'hidden' self-test program. Graeme Walton has discovered another couple of hidden options, also accessible from the 'test card' which you get by holding down the BREAK key and pressing Reset.

Once the TV test card is displayed, press the keys 'Q', 'A', 'Z', 'P', 'L' and 'M' for the self-test program. The version number is shown when the program starts up – the +3 I've borrowed from Editorial contains version 4·0 of the test suite.

Graeme has discovered you can return to the initial menu from the test card by holding down keys 'V' and 'B' at the same time. That menu used to contain a 'tape tester' option on earlier Spectrum 128s, but the +3 misses it off – presumably because of Amstrad's low-key approach to +3 cassettes, vital though they are.

Graeme finds that keys 'A', 'E' and 'U' pressed together from the test card call up the missing 'tape test' routine. On our +3 it gives a completely blank screen until you play a tape, at which point animated blocks of colour appear, rather like a colour sound-to-light display, or the loading pattern on a ZX-81. The pattern varies to reflect rhythms in the input signal, so you can get entertaining results by playing music into the cassette port and watching the screen pulse in sympathy.

It may be that there are several different versions of the +3 internal software, because Graeme says that on his +3 the combination of keys calls up a bar-graph tape tester, more like the one on the old 128.

In any case the old bar-graph tester can be called from +3 BASIC, using a snippet of code that Graeme has sent in. The relocatable code in Listing 1 calls up ROM routines that work just like the old 128 tester, with the added bonus of on-screen instructions.

If you want to use this code to re-align your tape heads you'll need a correctly recorded test-tape, made on a reference machine. There's no point using one of your own tapes, as the machine that recorded it may not have been aligned properly.

Graeme Walton wins this months' Tech Tips prize, £40 worth of software of his choice . . . Yep, that's right, the serene and benevolent management here have boosted the prize yet again – it was only £20 last year!

TECH TIPS LISTING 1

```
10 CLEAR 65499
20 FOR N=65500 TO
65520
30 READ X: POKE N,X
40 NEXT N
50 LET X=USR 65500
60 DATA 245, 175, 50, 29,
91
70 DATA 205, 0, 91, 205,
163
80 DATA 53, 62, 251, 50,
29, 91
90 DATA 205, 0, 91, 241,
201
```

JOIN THE TIPSTERS

If you come up with a new tip that can be explained in CRASH, or an improvement to one of the Tech Tape routines, please write to Tech Tips and tell the world what you've done.

Tech Tips is your column – your chance to share expertise with the Top Spectrum techsters. There's a prize of £40 of software of your choice for the best Tip published every month.

I'm keen to hear from you, but PLEASE don't expect – or demand! – a personal reply to your letters; there are hundreds of thousands of you and only one of me. Write to:

Simon N Goodwin, Tech Tips, CRASH PO *Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB*

TECH TASTER

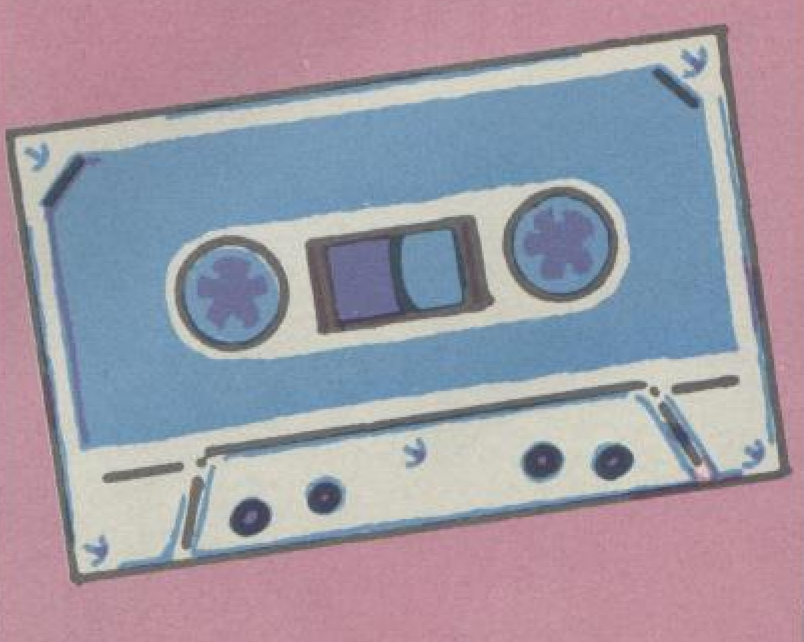
As I write it's near the end of March, and at last the CRASH Tech Tape is finished; this is the definitive summary of its contents.

The Tech Tape is a compendium of useful BASIC and machine code routines, put together by CRASH readers and writers, aimed at everyone interested in Spectrum technicalities – there's lots of interest, whether you're a programmer, musician or user.

comments in the source code and 20 pages of detailed documentation supplied with each tape.

If you've got one of the cheap Serial 8056 printers IBM dumped onto the UK market a year or so ago, you need our relocatable screen COPY routine, which produces small or large (full-width) graphics screen shots from any Spectrum.

Multiface 1 owners can use 'Three in One' to run three different 16K BASIC or machine code programs on one 48K Spectrum, swapping between them at the press of the magic button!



Programmers get ZIP2, a machine code BASIC compiler that can translate ZX BASIC to make it 200 times faster, and easy-to-use Turbo tape routines that let you LOAD AND SAVE headerless files at your choice of speed. The tape includes STAR BASE FOUR, a demonstration game that shows the speed of compiled code.

Also on the tape there's ZIP BREAK, which lets you break into machine code programs, a clear new character set, and a routine that redirects BREAK and all ZX BASIC errors to your own error-trapping routine, helping you to produce reliable, professional 48K or 128K programs.

Apart from ZIP, all the routines can be stored anywhere in memory and easily configured to suit your system. Files are unprotected, with

The Tech Tape music routines are ideal for anyone with a Sampler or SpecDrum. The tape includes four excellent new percussion sounds, contributed by Cheetah Marketing, plus utilities to edit, hear and graph sampled sounds and convert SpecDrum samples to work with the RAM Music Machine.

There's full source and object code for ZX-FX, a utility that turns ANY Spectrum sampler into a real-time sound processor, with on-screen metering and three distinct effects.

The Tech Tape is only available from CRASH, and supplies are limited – so order yours today!

Please send me a CRASH Tech Tape.

I enclose a cheque or postal order for £5.95 (£7.95 if my address is outside the mainland UK) made payable to NEWSFIELD LTD, or I am paying by VISA or Access with the special form below.

NAME ....

ADDRESS ....

....

.... **POSTCODE** ....

PLEASE DEBIT MY VISA/ACCESS ACCOUNT £
(delete as applicable)

EXPIRY DATE ....

CARDHOLDER'S ADDRESS (if different from above)

ADDRESS ....

.... **POSTCODE** ....

SEND THIS FORM AND YOUR PAYMENT TO: TECH TAPE, CRASH, *PO BOX 20, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 IDB*



WIN A SONY WATCHMAN

COURTESY OF

VIRGIN GAMES

(AND YOU CAN GET SOME ACTION FORCE, TOO!)

```
L
D A
R N D
A G V Y
G L I K J
O O R A M A
N U G O I B Y
F L I N T E A N
L P N Y X A A L E
Y X G J T U Y S M F
T E R R O R I S T H F
M J E S N A K E E Y E S
F U N B O H M R M J T W Q
Q M A C H I N E G U N P Z Y
U D Q O E G A T S O H E B
E O T G U W K P S R C A
Q U I C K K I C K R V
U R O D N A M M O C
I D T X L G I F T
C A A I O G N C
K K R W H O O
K O B A I B
I O O T R
T Z C I
T A K
E B
N
```

The attempts of Quick Kick and Airtight to fend off the machinations of the arch enemy COBRA have earned Virgin Games's *Action Force II* a CRASH Smash rating of 90%.

To complete each of their daunting missions, members of the Action Force team have to be trained to a high level of fitness and mental stamina. Each successful foray into unknown territory is preceded by months of physical and psychological preparation. Fortunately no such gruelling groundwork is necessary to participate in Virgin Games' exciting competition.

You don't even have to leave the comforting folds of your armchair – if you haven't got a pen, get someone to throw you one. Just activate one or two of those little grey cells and outline each of the **16** words hidden in this meticulously designed word diamond. All the words are connected with the Action Force team and their game, and it's so easy peasy, it shouldn't take you more than a couple of seconds to find them all (NOTE: connected words appear as one string).

Now comes the hard bit – toss your entry into an envelope, together with a list of the words found. Seal it up and send it to, **FORCEFUL COMP, CRASH,** ***PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB*** by June 7.

The lucky winner will receive a Sony Watchman (just right for savouring all those future episodes of Action Force) and a copy of the game. Runner up prizes include **three** Dragon fly helicopter toys, **ten** Airtight figures and **ten** copies of Action Force II. The winners will be drawn from the correct entries at random and the decision of the CRASH judges is final in all respects.

THE CANDY MAN CAN . . . OR SO HE THINKS

Just as it looked as if CRASH was to become the laughing stock of the gaming world, KATHARINA HAMZA reports on the turning of the tide . . .

THE day of the challenge dawns. As Ludlow awakes from yet another uneventful night, the lights go on all over town and the CRASH office is buzzing with anticipation – or is it fear? Every challenge so far has ended in tears, recriminations and boundless humiliation. Mention the subject casually and most reviewers, their faces wild and harrowed, suddenly recall an urgent appointment several miles away. Not so streetwise Robin Candy, who's finally decided to come out from behind his dark glasses to take part in one last ditch attempt to save the dwindling honour of CRASH.

As he saunters casually into the office, five fashionable minutes late, his eyes meet the challenger's gaze. Andrew Males from Stevenage (via Wembley and another competition win) has been ready and waiting efficiently for about an hour. They agree to play three ten minute bouts, each commencing on level five.

Following a brief exchange of tactics, Robin plugs in his joystick and his Saga Emperor keyboard ('Sometimes the joystick doesn't work', he explains, trying not to look paranoid) switches on a *Smiths* recording, and the challenge begins.

CRUMBLING CANDY

Andrew steams ahead with a score of 11924 in just one minute. Robin, following a slight hiccup at the selection screen (too busy looking cool to press the right key) is only just behind. The crunch comes as they approach the towers; Andrew shoots them all and scoops up his 50,000 bonus. Despite the musical accompaniment, which is beginning to sound like a funeral dirge, smooth dude Candy has one tower left and a lot less points. Andrew plays on in silent concentration; Candy's image is visibly crumbling. 'I'm losing' he mutters as his frantic wrist action becomes more and more desperate.

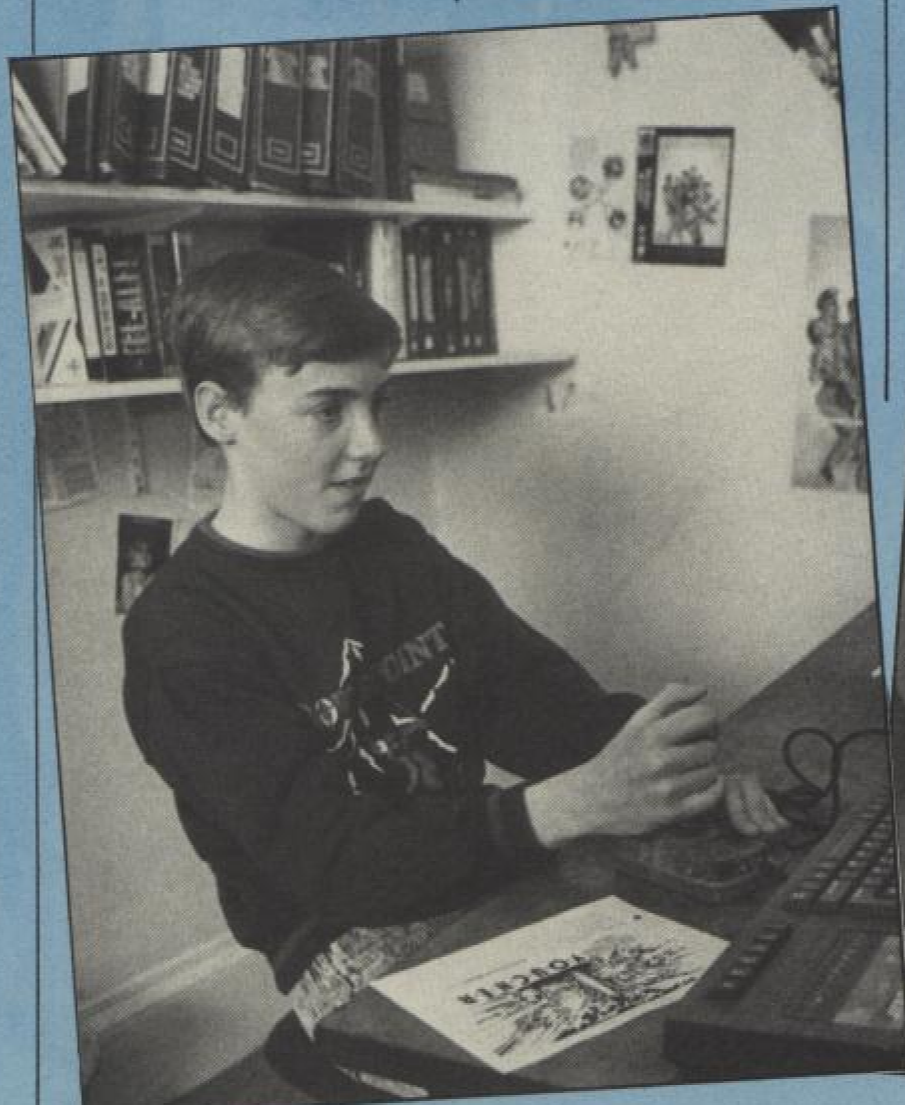
At the 6th wave they are both one tower short of the bonus; Andrew score, at 1075739, is still some way ahead of Robin's respectable 1020980. Half-way through the 7th wave the bout comes to an end. Robin tries to look as if he expected the outcome:

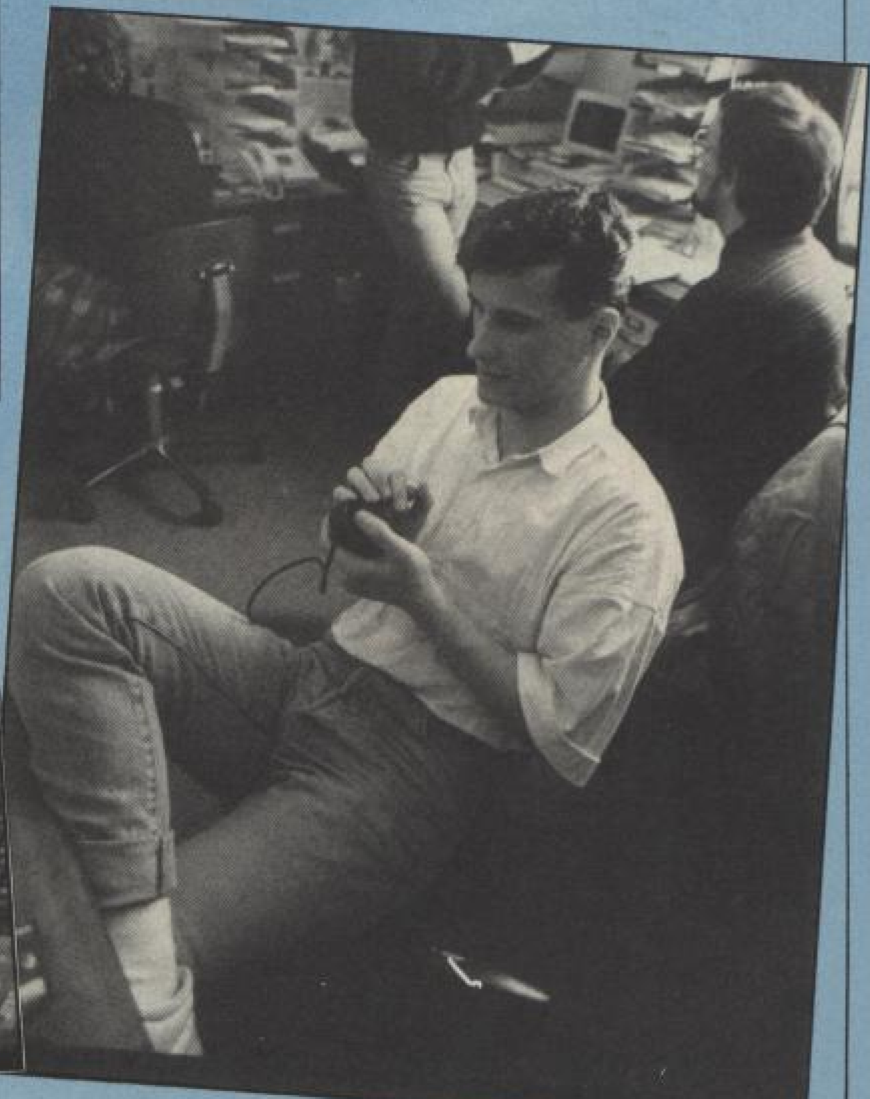
ROBIN: 1188135
ANDREW: 1288587

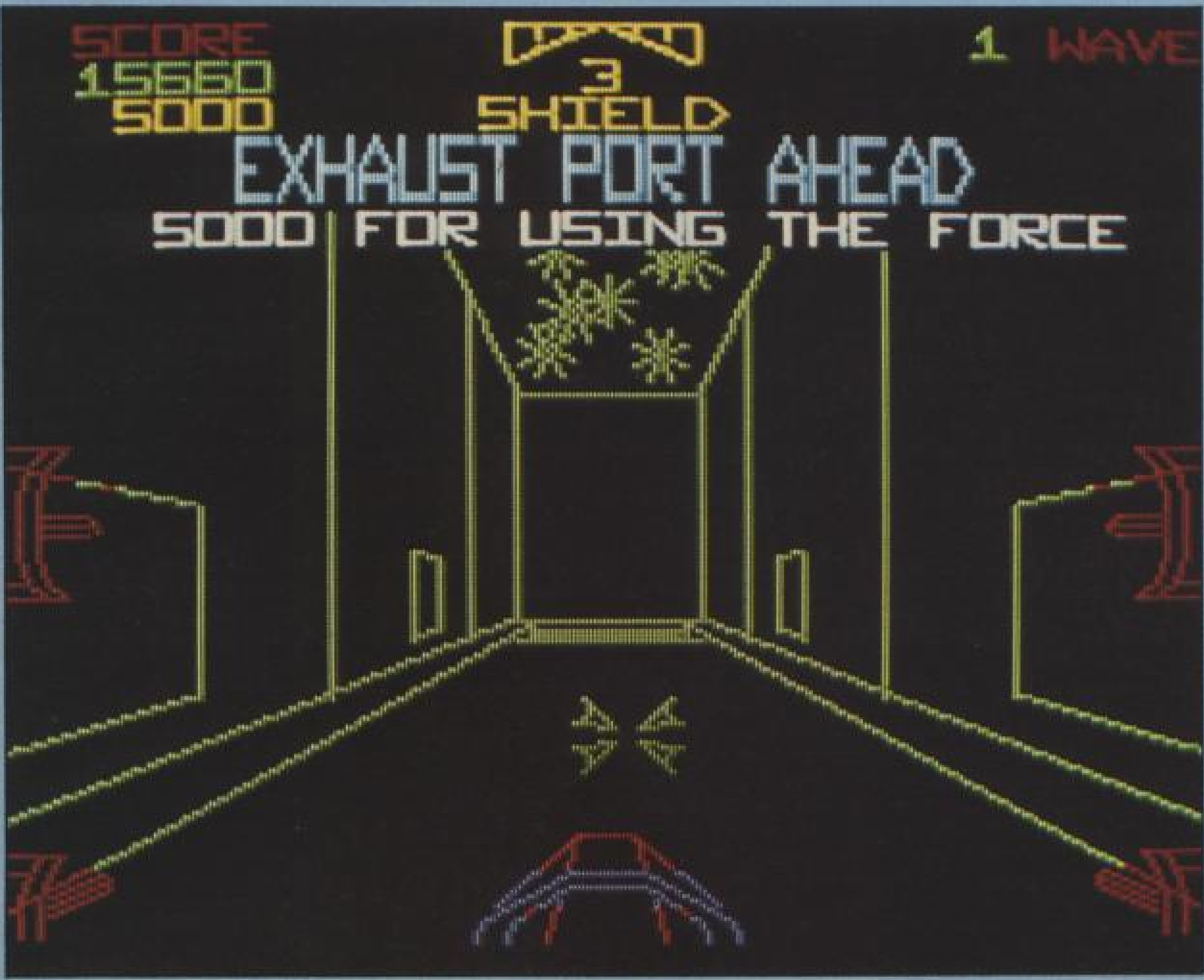
Andrew looks serious – he knows it's not all over yet. As they begin the second match, his concentration remains unimpaired. Unlike Robin, who utters a stream of unpublishable oaths, Andrew doesn't let a syllable pass his lips. Instead he surges ahead and reaches the Death Star with a massive score of 22957 compared with Robin's 13429. Both players reach the third stage with three towers left; at the 6th wave both have four towers remaining. The scores are evening out. Robin Candy's fingers begin to relax and his flamboyant wrist action becomes more subdued. Andrew looks tense but otherwise unmoved. As they hurtle to the end of the round, the scores look close.

ROBIN: 1210564
ANDREW: 1202288

It's a moment of utter disbelief. It's a break with CRASH tradition so complete that no-one is quite capable of comprehending it. The scores are checked but they







► A force to be reckoned with: Domark's *Star Wars*

remain the same; for the first time in the history of the CRASH challenge a CRASH reviewer has avoided total defeat. Even if Andrew goes on to win, Robin has upheld a little of the magazine's collective honour.

SWEET DISASTER

As they move into the third match, Robin looks confident and begins to sing, then stops as he realises he's distracting no-one other than himself. Andrew plays as efficiently as ever and the challenge progresses neck and neck.

At the 5th wave they both have three towers left. Andrew is just ahead with a score of 32382 to Robin's 30590. Again the towers prove the turning point: Robin clinches the 50,000 bonus and is ahead as they enter the 6th wave



► Konix in hand, Robin storms ahead to clear CRASH's bad name . . .



► A silent Andrew sits transfixed by the on-screen action.

trench. They're minutes away from the end of the match, when suddenly . . . Disaster strikes: Andrew misses the exhaust port and has to re-enter the trench. Meanwhile, Robin pushes ahead to a final score 30,000 points ahead of Andrew.

ROBIN: 1209587
ANDREW: 1179552

Incredible but true! A CRASH reviewer has finally won a challenge (even though the total scores tell a different story . . .). After four defeats, a fifth would have been a crushing blow. Robin Candy, who has averted the seemingly inevitable, looks as if he's wondering whether it really is better to look cool in triumph rather than cool in defeat. He's still making up his mind as the challengers slope off to lunch, leaving the office dazzled and dazed.

As the victor and vanquished melt into the sunset what better note to finish on, than Andrew's final greeting to Mrs Hall's English set and everyone else who knows him.

See you next time (Issue 54, a Tips Editor and a small ship called Cybernoid . . .).

FORCEFUL *STAR WARS*

CONVERTED by Domark from the superb vector graphic Atari coin-op, *Star Wars* gained a worthy 84% in Issue 48 of CRASH.

Following the storyline of the film, the player is sent on a do-or-die mission against Imperial forces, battling TIE fighters in deep space before traversing the surface of the Death Star, to finally negotiate the equatorial trench. Here, some seat-of-the-pants flying is necessary to avoid catwalks and enemy flak, in order to reach the end where two photon torpedoes down an exhaust port secures the destruction of the Empire's enormous battle station.

Comparisons to Realtime's *Star Strike* were inevitable, but the team generally regarded Domark's efforts with some respect, saying it was as good a conversion of the original that you are likely to get on the Spectrum. One or two niggling faults halted a Smash rating – most notably from Robin himself! – but the fast (although totally silent) vector graphic action is still worth a look.

Domark also have the licenses for Atari's two other Star Wars games, *The Empire Strikes Back* and *Return of the Jedi*. These have been promised for '88 but whether they will ever appear on the Spectrum, we'll just have to wait and see . . .

CHALLENGE NICK ROBERTS!

Flushed with the success of his colleague, Nick Roberts has agreed to proffer his butt-kicking services to the next reader who dares enter the CRASH challenge. If you think you're any good at Hewson's *Cybernoid* (CRASH Smashed in Issue 51) then fill in the form and wait . . .

Maybe you'll have to travel to Ludlow sometime in May. Then again, maybe you won't. Who can tell? Either way, you've no chance at all with this form just sitting here; fill it in and return it to: CRASH Challenge, CRASH, *PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB*.

Dear Nick Roberts

I challenge you to play Cybernoid **in the plush offices of CRASH magazine. My high score is already *this* big:**
And it'll probably be even higher by May . . .

NAME ....
ADDRESS ....
.... POSTCODE ....

TELEPHONE NUMBER ....
AGE ....

If you're lucky(?) enough to be selected for the Challenge, we'll pay your fare to Ludlow and home again, keep you entertained and nourished while you're here, and promise that there'll be hell to pay if you win.

DEAD AGAIN? LOST THAT LAST LIFE ON THE FIRST LEVEL? WELL, DON'T DESPAIR – EVEN LOSERS CAN BE WINNERS WITH ROBIN CANDY'S

SCORES

SCORES is a monthly game-by-game list showing a whole range of scores on the very LATEST games (no more *Jet Set Willy* records!).

Each month there's the top score received so far, plus a couple of others so you can measure yourself against mere mortals as well as the million-point mob.

From all the entries – irrespective of whether they're printed or not – there are five winners picked at random. The first prize winner receives **£40** of software plus a CRASH cap and T-shirt, while four runners-up receive CRASH caps and T-shirts. So don't forget to tell us on the form what software and T-shirt you'd like – *if* you're one of the lucky ones!

ARKANOID – REVENGE OF DOH	Ocean
Andrew Levine, Leeds	763900
Timo Partala, Tampere, FINLAND	132750
D Openshaw, Welling	10130

ATF	Digital Integration
Sean O'Donnell, Mablethorpe	14800
Philip White, Brockworth	9520
Simon Aspinall, Cawood	5815

BASKET MASTER	Imagine
Steven Cooper, Cleveland	83-0
Alasdair Macintosh, Bishopton	44-12
David Brewster, London NW9	36-23

BUBBLE BOBBLE	Firebird
Damian Collier, Leeds	10253530
Antony Britten, Peterborough	1107210
Jon Hopkins, Neath	497120

COBRA	Ocean
Dave Alexander, Eastleigh	501450
Martin Plane, Great Yarmouth	165050
Paul Taylor, Oakham	48400

COMBAT SCHOOL	Ocean
Gary Boardman, Liverpool	171500
Scott Heary, Penicuik	156790
Michael Santos, Amble	60290

DRILLER	Incentive
Simon Towerzey, Warrington	6190101
Andrew Hayes, Weston-super-Mare	1876321
Paul Tyrrell, Woolacombe	117600

ENDURO RACER	Activision
M Needs, Telford	6602523
Robin Cattani, Tenbury Wells	498765
Glenn Cormie, Forfar	365042

EXOLON	Hewson
Ben Powell, Kettering	1544400
James Spilling, Oxford	668200
Telford Clarke, Belfast	43100

FIREFLY	Ocean/Special FX
Richard Heath, East Dereham	419200
Andy Taylor, Woonton	312600
Andrew Seagrave, Bromwich	263810

FLYING SHARK	Firebird
Alan Lothian, Wallasey	482640
David Routledge, Seaham	213610
Daniel Schlosberg, Raanana, ISRAEL	41700

GAUNTLET	US Gold
Paul Ratcliffe, Barnsley	16911194
Tony King, Steyning	119383
Adam Saye, Devizes	111000

GRYZOR	Imagine
Gerald McCay, Belfast	240100
Alexander Venn, Clevedon	158900
Craig Rubinson, Leicester	120200

IK+	System 3
John Hicks, Warrington	164500
Guy Rowland, Bishop's Stortford	58600
Jamie Russell, Beckenham	29100

NEBULUS	Hewson
David Bradford, Sutton-in-Ashfield	82810
W Wong, Connanig Town	28700
Julie Juggs, Plenthorne	21050

OUT RUN	US Gold
Timothy Goodchild, Ipswich	94120600
Stephen Sadler, Lichfield	17946830
Daniel Brice, Kingswood	1598700

PLATOON	Ocean
Alex Higham, Southsea	129800
Gordon McMullan, Leigh-on-Sea	72900
Hayden Morris, Chatteris	8600

RAMPAGE	Activision
Jeremy Scott, Inverurie	159654
Stuart Walker, Widnes	150750
Anthony Greenfield, Axford	37260

RENEGADE	Imagine
Mark Harris, Boreham Wood	3321052
Malcolm Walls, Dollar, Clacks	112072
Gregory Duddy, Kilfennan	54850

RYGAR	US Gold
Gareth Griffiths, Caernarfon	2438200
Richard Bates, Pontypool	395500
Jonathan Ridehalgh, Markfield	371420

STAR WARS	Domark
Paul Hadfield, Bolton	100570050
Barry Quinn, Hartlepool	1263400
Steven Budge, Kilmarnock	1176750

SUPER HANG-ON	Electric Dreams
Robin Cavill, Dewsbury	12001760
Jonathan Abraham, Ludlow	3717000
Willy Franklin, Ledbury	302300

THUNDERCATS	Elite
Justin Fisher, Gedling	283150
M Oswald, Stamford	240900
Kathryn Waldock, Bishop Auckland	90070

ZYNAPS	Hewson
Alan Lothian, Wallasey	232470
Alex Youngs, Calne	63750
Melvin Whitehouse, Mapperley	48350

WINNERS

Lucky old **Mark Jullion** of Garston near Watford was first out of the skip this month. He gets £40 worth of software, a CRASH cap and an Evil Emperor T-shirt (his choice, not ours!). His choice of software contains such high-flyers as *Northstar*, *Flying Shark* and *Firefly*. The following four folks will each receive a CRASH cap and a CRASH T-shirt. **Stewart Saint** (he of the dodgy joystick) from Little America (how quaint) near Plymouth, **Ross Edwards** from Kenley in Surrey (who'd like a Red Moon T-shirt), **Clayton Satchell** from the fine town of Stourbridge and **Steven Ellis** of Stoke-on-Trent.

Remember – *any* score sent in to **SCORES** can win you a prize.

SEND ME YOUR SCORES

Send this form (or a copy) with your scores for up to three games to **ROBIN CANDY'S SCORES, CRASH, *PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB*.** Only genuine scores will be accepted; any improbably huge scores will be immediately binned and the sender will be forced to share a desk with Mark Caswell – a fate worse than listening to Rick Astley.

MY SCORES ARE:

GAME	SCORE	DATE ACHIEVED
1		
2		
3		

IF A WIN TOP PRIZE I WOULD LIKE THIS £40 WORTH OF SOFTWARE: ....

....

....

AND IF I WIN ANY PRIZE I WOULD LIKE THIS CRASH T-SHIRT, CHOSEN FROM THOSE ADVERTISED IN THE CRASH HYPERMARKET: ....

....

The decision of CRASH's omnipotent, all-seeing judges is absolutely final in all respects; so don't even think about cheating – you don't stand a chance!

WINNERS & PRIZES

CRAZY ABOUT TITUS
Issue 50

You went crazy over Titus, the French software house, in the Golden Issue of CRASH – it was our most popular competition of that issue. You had to trace the route of the Ferrari Testarossa using our puzzling pictogram – the answer was, of course, route C. The first ten boy racers out of the boot of Lloyd's clapped-out Morris Minor each receive a Nikko radio-controlled Ferrari and a copy of *Crazy Cars*. They are . . .

Gregory Frensham, London E15 2BQ; Patrick Downes, Pontypridd CF3 71S; Spencer Harbard, Kent ME2 2YN; Peter Rhodes, Worcs DY11 5NQ; John Davies, W Yorks HX3 9PD; Mark Slack, Derbyshire DE55 1AA; Paul Cooper, Essex RM8 1JH; Gavin Austin, Herts CM21 9ES; Scott and Chris Reece, West Sussex RH16 1PH; John Gilmartin, Derby DE2 0PB.

DESTINY'S BEST COMPETITION YETI
Issue 50

Amongst the numerous Margaret Thatcher, Nick Roberts and Eddie Edwards entries (all very gruesome) for Destiny's *Yeti* competition came a few well drawn and original entries. The best of a very good bunch came from **Wayne Britcliffe** of South Humberside DN15 8EB. He receives the first prize of both the *Yeti* and *Teladon* prints of the original inlay artwork – and very good they are too! Like the 25 runners-up he also gets a Destiny sweatshirt and mug. The artistic many are . . .

George A Toth, Middx TW3 4HX; James Shephard, Essex CO6 1BJ; Clive Jenner, Norfolk NR31 9NZ; John Kent, S.Yorks S8 8GH; Emma Sharp, Lancs PR2 4NS; Simon Brookes, Powys LD1 5LD; Stephen Martin, London N13 5DT; A O Szymanski, London SW12 8SF; Dave Bassom, Kent DA8 3EN; Neil Howell, Chester CH1 5AY; Stephen Grant, Sussex BN1 6LR; Bob Hillery, Avon BS17 2SS; Martin Lawless, Lancs BL8 4QA; Glenn Taylor, N.Wales; Mr Paul Harris, Cornwall PL26 7NZ; Edward Gillespie, Beds LU3 2TG; Master M Z Boam, Nottinghamshire NG16 2DT; Tony Shirley, London SE22 9ES; N J Palmer, Norfolk NR4 6AG; Mark Robson, Northumberland NE42 5DY; D R Stanners, Birmingham B8 3RQ; N Bauer, Lancs OL12 8SJ; Stephen Ward, Co.Clare, Eire; Matthew Kaye, Cambs PE17 2AS; Spencer Wakelam, Wirral L61 4XF.

PLATOON COMPETITION
Issue 50

The lucky winner of the fantastic original storyboards for the *Platoon* computer game – drawn by Ocean's Simon Butler – is **Sean Flatley** of London N8 9SE. He knew all the answers to the film related questions posed in Issue 50. The five runners-up who each get a copy of the Smash Ocean game are **Steven Lakin** from the West Midlands B63 4QZ; **Richard Shaw** from down in Somerset TA5 2QX; **Michael 'James' Brown** of West Yorkshire WF5 0QD; **Jake Barayet** coming from London N16 6NJ and French-sounding Pierre Scotney of English-sounding Bristol BS20 8BA. A further five runners-up will each receive a copy of the fabulous *Platoon* movie soundtrack. They reveal themselves as being . . .

Mr Ramon W Russell, Edinburgh EH7 5PL; Stephen Lincoln, Essex CM0 8ET; Kevin Smith, Durham DL3 0NL; Jason Naylor, Leeds LS14 2DJ; G Howling, Tyne & Wear NE28 8UD.

DIGITAL INTEGRATION COMPETITION
Issue 50

The Digital Integration-based questions may have been hard for some but the entries still came flooding in. The five top winners each get a personal cassette walkman stereo thingy and a copy of the nearly-Smashed game *ATF*. The fearless five are **Christopher G Scott** from Lincolnshire PE11 3UE; **Thomas Ball** who lives in Oxon OX14 1QE; **Phil Jones** of Gwynedd LL65 3LL; **K Graham** from Newcastle-upon-Tyne NE3 4TS and **G Farrow** down in Devon PL7 3PF. The five second prize winners, who each get a copy of the game and an *ATF* sweatshirt, are **Barry Gorman** of Northern Ireland BT28 1SU; **Edward Robinson** from Sussex RH17 6SQ; **Andrew McGregor** up in South Yorkshire DN9 3ES; **David Banks** of Lancashire PR4 1HT and **J L Thompson** of North Yorkshire LS24 9QW. The twenty runners-up who get a copy of *ATF* are . . .

John Clifton, Kent DA3 8QY; Jason Mann, Herts WD6 4TF; Adam Hold, Herts AL10 8EZ; Mark Voas, Merseyside L45 8LU; Steven Styger, Holland; Sean Drury, Nr.Wakefield WF3 1SS; D A Tate, Norfolk NR31 7PQ; Gary Quigley, Dublin 11 Eire; Miles Willmott, Derbyshire DE4 2JJ; Roger Judd, Tyne & Wear NE10 0RR; Keith Roberts, Devon PL5 4ET; Iain Champion, S.Humbs DN19 7JG; Dean Morris, Gwent NP6 4LB; Daniel Schlosberg, ISRAEL; C K Lewis, Surrey KT21 2JG; Paul Hutchinson, Cleveland TS17 0EW; R Harwood, W.Sussex RH13 8BX; Mark Clabburn, Norwich NR2 2HD; S Brownlee, Scotland TD1 2EL; Jason Massey, Notts NG17 8HX.

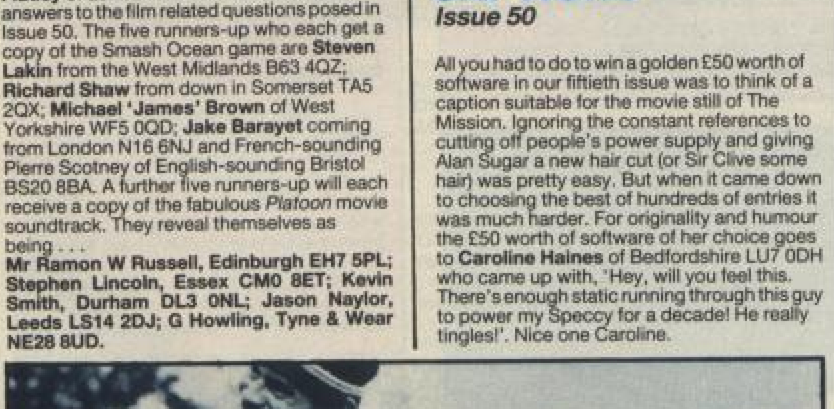
BEARD AND WONDERFUL
Issue 48

Rod Tregale from Berkshire SL2 1LB may not be bearded but he's certainly wonderfully able at matching the name to the face – as questioned in the Christmas Issue. He gets the whole CRASH T-shirt range and any game reviewed in Issue 48. The ten runners-up, who also have the choice of any game reviewed in Issue 48, are . . .

Mike Cooney, Roscommon Eire; Stephen Ward, Co.Clare Eire; Fraser Hardie, Glasgow G44 4RB; Gervase Lam, Bucks HP21 8NW; Jorgen Jacobsen, Denmark; Khalid Jamil, London NW2 6LA; Mr D A Lee-Keow, Coventry, CV3 3GB; Martin Lewis, Shropshire TF2 7ST; Philip Wynn, Beds MK45 4BE; Oliver Critchley, Inverness-shire PH31 4AN.

GOLDEN CAPTIONS
Issue 50

All you had to do to win a golden £50 worth of software in our fiftieth issue was to think of a caption suitable for the movie still of The Mission. Ignoring the constant references to cutting off people's power supply and giving Alan Sugar a new hair cut (or Sir Clive some hair) was pretty easy. But when it came down to choosing the best of hundreds of entries it was much harder. For originality and humour the £50 worth of software of her choice goes to **Caroline Haines** of Bedfordshire LU7 0DH who came up with, 'Hey, will you feel this. There's enough static running through this guy to power my Speccy for a decade! He really tingles!'. Nice one Caroline.



All winners, please allow 28 days for the delivery of your prizes. All queries regarding competitions run in CRASH should be sent to **Frances Mable, CRASH, *PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB***. Please don't ring Frances as she has enough trouble reading through all your entries as it is.

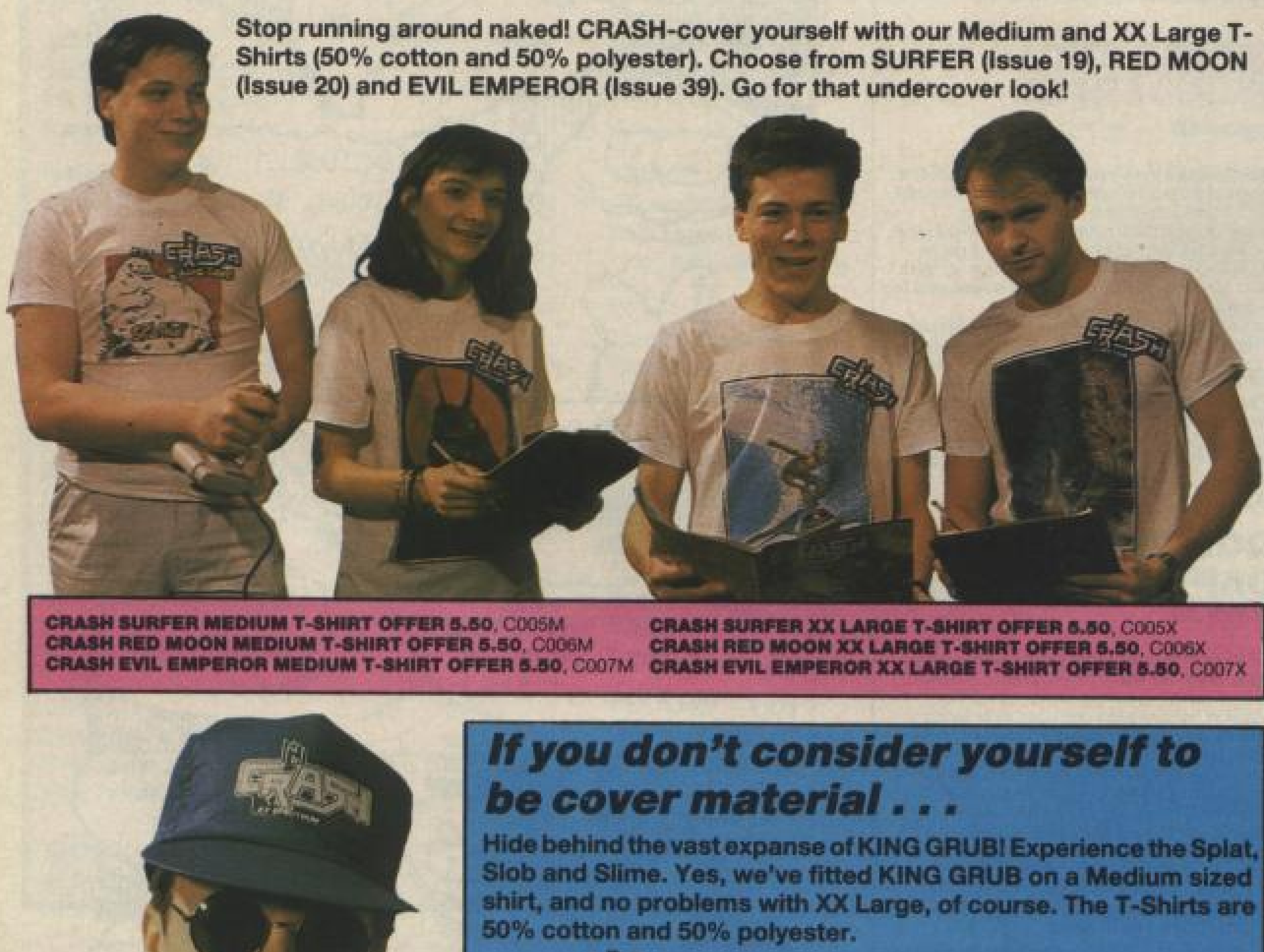


CRASH HYPERMARKET

Feel you deserve another piece of the action? Bothered about having to travel far for software? Bored by the limited choice available on the high street? Fed up with being charged full retail price? Well, don't! Whether top games software, high-tech joysticks or designer T-Shirts or just simply dustprotective keyboard covers, CRASH HYPERMARKET will despatch at special discount prices, efficiently and fast. The incredibly low deals include VAT, postage & packing.

The Great Cover Up!

Stop running around naked! CRASH-cover yourself with our Medium and XX Large T-Shirts (50% cotton and 50% polyester). Choose from SURFER (Issue 19), RED MOON (Issue 20) and EVIL EMPEROR (Issue 39). Go for that undercover look!



CRASH SURFER MEDIUM T-SHIRT OFFER 5.50, C005M
CRASH RED MOON MEDIUM T-SHIRT OFFER 5.50, C006M
CRASH EVIL EMPEROR MEDIUM T-SHIRT OFFER 5.50, C007M
CRASH SURFER XX LARGE T-SHIRT OFFER 5.50, C005X
CRASH RED MOON XX LARGE T-SHIRT OFFER 5.50, C006X
CRASH EVIL EMPEROR XX LARGE T-SHIRT OFFER 5.50, C007X



If you don't consider yourself to be cover material . . .

Hide behind the vast expanse of KING GRUB! Experience the Splat, Slob and Slime. Yes, we've fitted KING GRUB on a Medium sized shirt, and no problems with XX Large, of course. The T-Shirts are 50% cotton and 50% polyester.

KING GRUB!

CRASH KING GRUB MEDIUM T-SHIRT, C008M
CRASH KING GRUB XX LARGE T-SHIRT, C008X

Steve does it,

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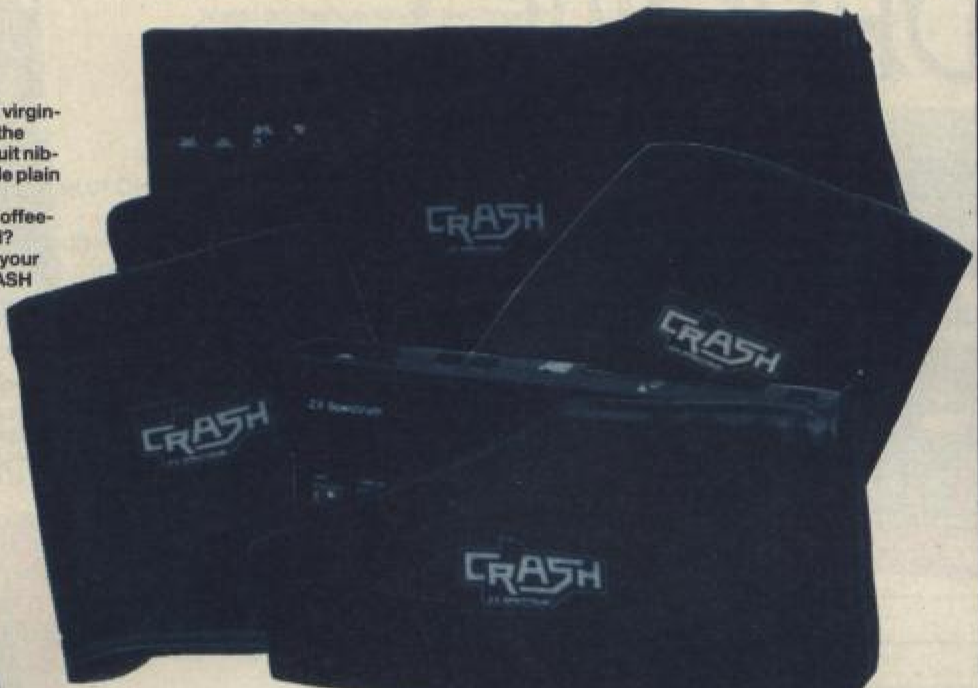
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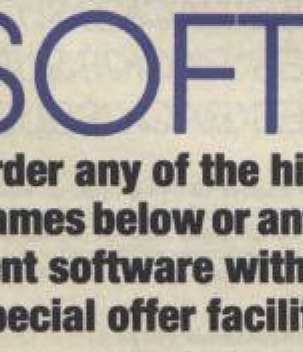




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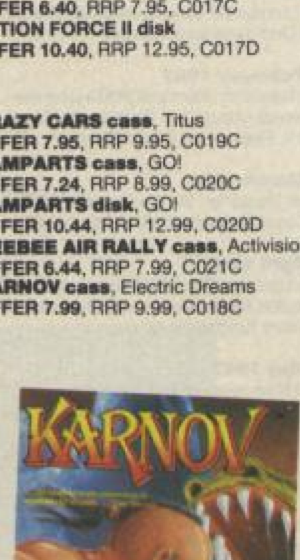
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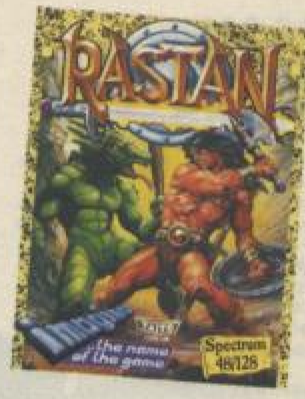
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The Quill analysed! The fabled ZX Microdrive appears! Run It Again: Pengo games! Graphics utilities! Living Guide: boardgames, simulations, strategy, adventure! The second-earliest surviving back number!

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Denton Designs! Sinclair Story 3! Maps: Knight Lore, Underwurlde! Leonardo graphics! Datel sound sampler! Artist: David Thorpe!

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Gremlin Graphics profile! Artist: Bob Wakelin! Map: Gyron Atrium!

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CRL profile! Oliposter! Round-up of Basic compilers! Artist: Rich Shenfield! Maps: Dynamite Dan, Shadowfire!

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Electronic Pencil Company profile! Maps: Alien 8, Dun Darach!

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Holografix profile! Holograms! Map: Nodes Of Yesod! Platinum Productions profile!

No 22 November 1985
Fanzine File! Microdrive tips! Artist: Susan Rowe! Fantasy gamesbooks!

No 23 December 1985
Melbourne House! Computer graphics! Artist: Dave Beeson!

No 24 Xmas 1985/86
Artist: Oliver Frey! Gargoyle Games profile! Lloyd's Lookback! Hewson profile!

No 25 February 1986
Durell profile! Microsphere! FORTH and extensions to ZX BASIC!

No 26 March 1986
St Bride's profile! Spectrum 128! Micronet 800! Multiface 1!

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Playing Tips supplement! Mel Croucher! Imagine profile! PBM convention!

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Fanzines! Martech profile! Composite Video Interface! SpecDrum!

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First PBM Mailbox! Homegrown software! Realtime profile! Maps: Cylu, Sir Fred, Saboteur, Tantalus!

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Birth Of A Game! Laser Genius! Maps: Tantalus, Movie!

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Software Projects! Word Processing! Maps: Pentagram, Heavy On The Magick!

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Programmer: Dave Perry! GAC! Maps: Core, Ghosts 'n' Goblins, Bobby Bearing! Echo Synthesizer!

No 33 October 1986
Programmers: Jon Ritman, Costa Panayi! Maps: Dan Dare, Cauldron II! SpecDrumming!

No 34 November 1986
Programmer: Don Priestley! Genesis Update! Maps: Dynamite Dan II, Equinox, Universal Hero! Music Machine!

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Designer: Dan Malone! Computer Advertising! Maps: Glider Rider, Thrust, Lightforce! MIDI!

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Lloyd's Lookback! Spectrum Music! Maps: Scooby Doo, Heartland, Druid!

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John Richardson: Jetman! CRASH Reviewers revealed! Match Day Challenge! Maps: Fairlight II, Firelord, Avenger, Dandy!

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Fanzines! Designer: Bernie Drummond! Maps: Cobra, Impossaball, Uridium! MIDI!

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Arcades Update! The Z88! Programmer: Steve Taylor! Maps: Nosferatu, Double Take, Future Knight, Feud!

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Terminal Man returns! Playing Tips supplement! Maps: Short Circuit, Antiriad, Conquest, Into The Eagle's Nest, Sceptre Of Bagdad, Dragon's Lair II, Thrust II, Fat Worm Blows A Sparky, Tarzan, Aliens!

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CAGE MATCH

Producer: **Entertainment USA**
Retail price: **£1.99**
Authors: **P Atkinson and J Brennan**

The interplanetary wrestling committee are staging the most bizarre wrestling match of them all. In the guise of six alien forms, ranging from bug-eyed beetle to brawny barbarian, one or two players battle it out in the intergalactic championship.

Combat takes place within a three-sided monochromatic cage under the gaze of a suitably intergalactic audience. Participants may grab, kick, hit, head butt, neck chop and throw their opponent, the objective being to stun him long enough to climb up the sides of the cage and win the match. Unless he fails to shake the climbing wrestler off the mesh, the unlucky fighter left in the ring disappears as the solid looking cage floor turns into a bottomless abyss of flashing lights.

Two energy bars indicate the status of each player's strength; momentary periods of rest give dwindling health a chance to recover. Success means promotion to a tougher match, a tougher opponent and another shot at becoming intergalactic wrestler supreme.

CRITICISM

● " **Pathetic is the first, and probably only printable word that sprang to my mind whilst playing** Cage Match. **Horribly deformed character sprites hobble woodenly around the bland, unattractive backdrop. Wrestling isn't my favourite sport at the best of times, and even this intergalactic version failed miserably to spark any sort of enthusiasm. Apart from the dire graphics, the gameplay has very limited appeal, with the combatants being limited to a few superfluous moves; your poor old character is usually on the receiving end of the physical barrage, since the computer controlled opponent consistently wipes the floor with you. Not that the game actually gives you much incentive to try. Take my advice: steer clear of** Cage Match. "
MARK



● *" Why must we continue to endure such rubbish from some Spectrum programmers? Surely they must realise a bad game when they see it? Cage Match is nothing but utter drivel. The graphics are fine until they start to move, being jerky and inaccurate. The sound is similarly pathetic, consisting of a few meagre white noise effects. And as for the game – where is it? The only way you can last in a bout is to avoid your opponent. You've no chance of beating him as the moves (I presume there are some) are impossible to access. And he recovers so quickly that you might as well not have bothered in the first place. Spectrum computers need this like an eskimo needs a fridge. "*
PAUL

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: poor perspective and jerky animation
Sound: a few weak white noise effects
Options: choice of six different characters. One or two players
General rating: a beat 'em up not even worthy of a budget label

Presentation	47%
Graphics	28%
Playability	12%
Addictive qualities	14%
OVERALL	**15%**

DENIZEN

Producer: **Players**
Retail price: **£1.99**
Authors: **Paul Griffiths, Mike Brown, Martin Severn and Andy Severn**

Contact has been lost with the orbital plutonium reprocessing installation, and the Marine Corp top brass believe Jabba McGut, leader of alien terrorist group, Denizen, to be responsible. Armed only with the latest in technical weaponry – the self loading 'Quick Kill' rifle – the player sets about destroying Jabba McGut and his allies.

The terrorists are hiding in sub levels one, two, and three of the installation, and on each level 20 explosive bolts have to be detonated to jettison the section into space. The game starts on sub level one and the player is provided with 99 rounds of ammunition. Extra ammo and energy can be collected and a torch used to illuminate darkened areas. Parts of the screen are blocked off by doors, but collection of key cards allows access to further sections of the complex.

Once all of the bolts on a level have been detonated, the player has 20 seconds to find the lift that takes him to the next level, before being blown into the void.

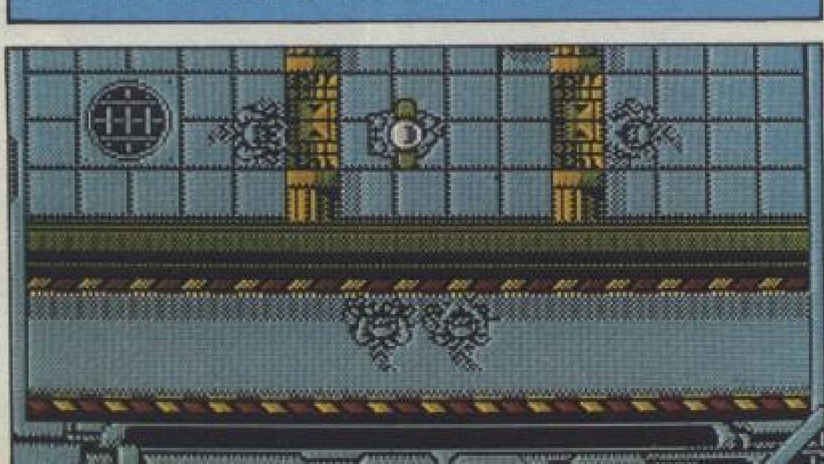
On reaching the third level, the player enters the lair of Jabba McGut, where the evil one is faced in a fight to the death.

NICK

" **The quality of Players' budget games these days is amazing – even better than the majority of full price games.** Denizen **is packed with little extras that add to the presentation. The title screen bears a VCR Scroller with digitised pictures of the programming team and characters appearing to a brilliant sound track. The game itself has got some really great graphics (level 3 especially), and colour has been used to it's full advantage with hardly any clash visible at all. Only the slow character movement irritates to any degree; another excellent game from Players, keep it up lads!** "

MARK

" **Graphically,** Denizen **is good, with a dependable looking Marine yomping through loads of smart meanie-filled screens. My only real moan is the self-loading 'Quick Kill' rife which is anything but quick. Several frantic pounds on the fire button were needed to elicit a response, by which point the alien hoodlums had usually sent my character to an early grave. The game style is looking a bit jaded now; you've probably seen it all before, but** Denizen **is a reasonable shoot 'em up and still worth a look.** "

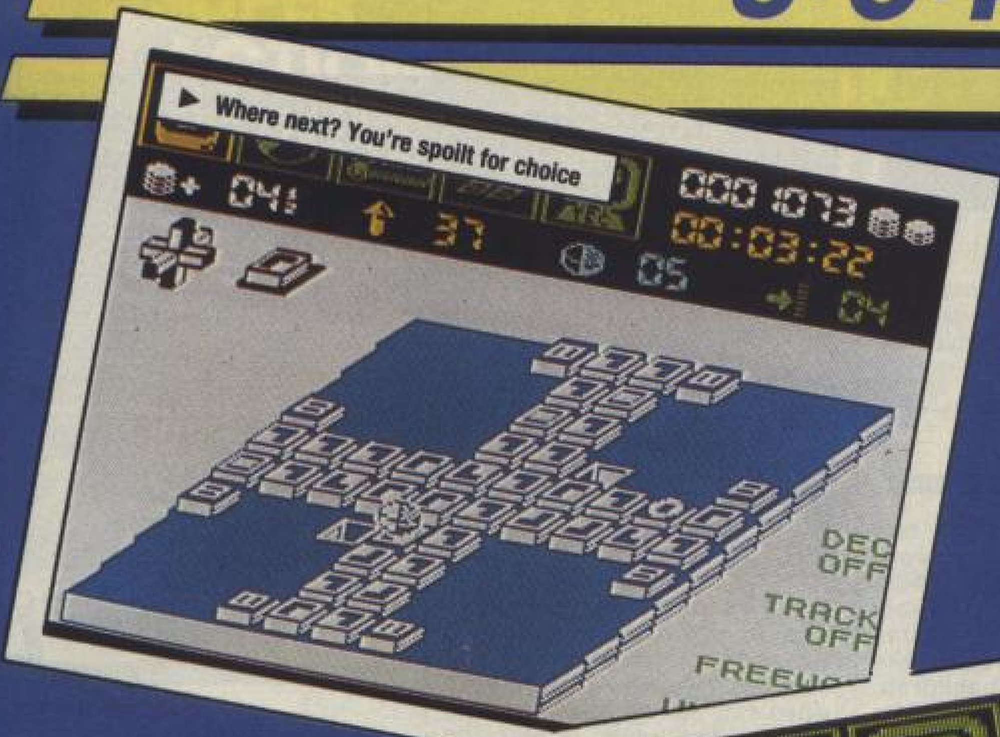


COMMENTS

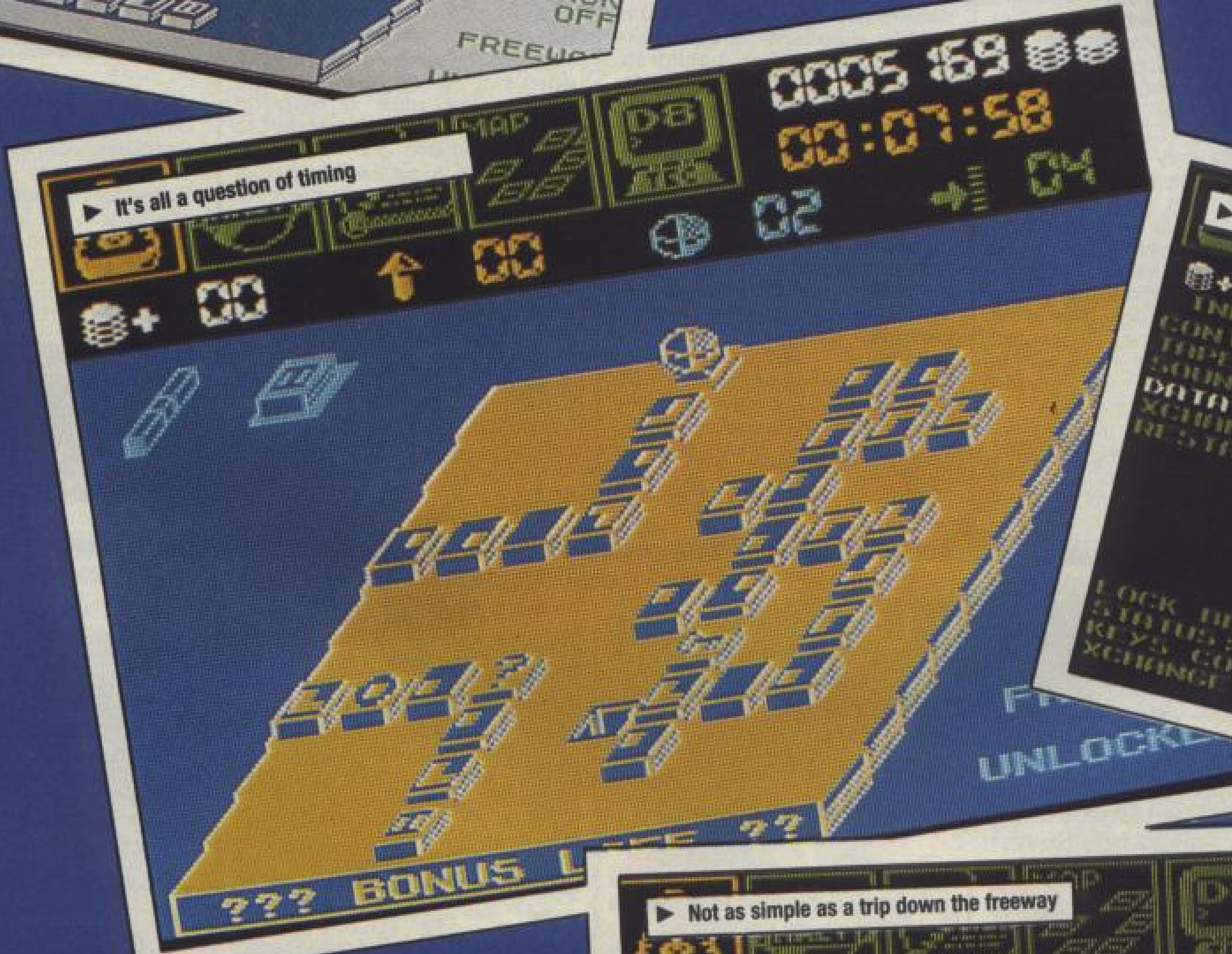
Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: super digitised pictures on title screen. Game graphics improve the further you get, and the end sequence is terrific. Lots of colour and little clash
Sound: poor sound effects but good title tune
Options: definable keys
General rating: sadly, the game doesn't live up to the lively presentation

Presentation	88%
Graphics	65%
Playability	60%
Addictive qualities	57%
OVERALL	**59%**

S·O·P·H·I·S·T·R·Y



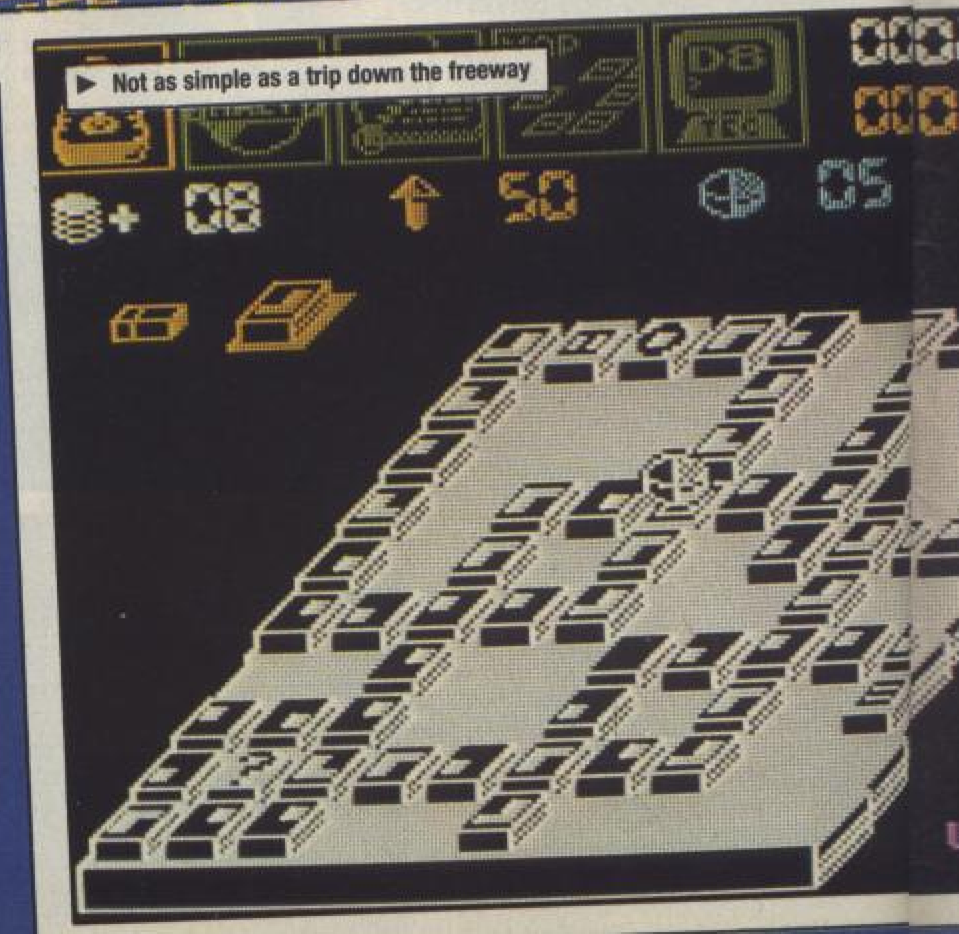
▶ Where next? You're spoilt for choice



▶ It's all a question of timing



▶ Access the locks t... olve...



▶ Not as simple as a trip down the freeway

Producer: **CRL**
Retail price: **£7.95**
Authors: **TFMG and TEBS**





Sophistry takes place in a complex of 21 abstract levels. Each level comprises several interconnected 3-D game boards consisting of marked blocks. At the beginning of the game only 20% of the structure is opened up. The player's objective is to obtain the 64 keys scattered throughout the environment which will unlock the gates leading to the 21st level and open the construction 100%. This can be achieved by retrieving the keys in person or by amassing points to trade for them.

The player takes control of small pod-like craft capable of moving in all four directions. As it jumps across the blocks their different attributes are activated; scoring blocks and target blocks increase points. Landing on blocks and jokers, in various sequences of ascending and descending order, gains bonus points. Missing a block or attempting to leave the board at an unmarked exit results in the loss of one of five lives.

The basic concept of search and find is complicated by the properties peculiar to each block. A status panel to the left of the screen indicates whether certain restrictions are in operation or not. On some boards exits are locked and cannot be opened until a certain number of points have been scored or a specified period of time has been spent on the current board. Conversely, other boards must be cleared before a stopwatch countdown reaches zero.

Other features include mystery blocks (a variety of beneficial and adverse effects), false exits and seekers; contact with the latter means instant death. Tracking status determines how much strategic thinking is necessary to negotiate each board. A random chain reaction which creates fatal low blocks, a force which keeps the pod moving until it hits a target and sudden countdowns are just a few of the problems to be encountered. In trickier situations one of the player's 50 uppers may be activated. These increase the value of all scoring blocks by one and occasionally recover blocks which have disappeared.

In between boards, the player can exchange points for extra uppers, the elimination of seekers, the opening of locks or bonus lives. A map and selective instructions can also be consulted. On-screen displays indicate current level, number of lives and uppers remaining, game time and score.

" Sophistry **is complex, compelling and original. It derives its tactical elements from games like patience and chess and makes ingenious use of its three dimensions. The graphics are polished; the pod hops smoothly from brick to brick and the texture of the squares is innovatively exploited. The various tracking and locking features, block sequences and restrictions add incredible depth to the basic board game principle. Flexibility is all – there are endless possibilities for complicated variations. Success depends on a wide range of skills: some screens require quick reactions and joystick control as well as strategy and logical thought. Fortunately there are more ways than one of conquering the complex, so if you can't see your way through a particularly tough screen the game doesn't just grind to a halt. My only quibble regards the instructions which brim with informative detail but lack a straightforward explanation of the basic rules. Don't let this put you off: the indecipherable information sheet hides a highly addictive, ingeniously devised game with a brain. If you've also got one, buy** Sophistry. "
KATI

" It's amazing how the quality of games can vary within a company. CRL, not exactly renowned for hundreds of awe-inspiring games, have certainly come up with the goods this time. Sophistry **is not just another puzzle game – it requires a great amount of planning and thought, combined with arcade reactions and risk. Unlike most puzzle games the object is not as simple as it first seems. A great amount of mapping is required for anybody hoping to have a chance of getting anywhere with it. The presentation is very original – as with most games there are many options, but these can also be accessed from within the game, not just on the title screen. With such a wide combination of things that can happen on each of the screens it is impossible not to be enthralled by** Sophistry. **With this and** Brainstorm **on offer, puzzler's are in for a real treat this month. "**
PAUL

" This game is packed full of variety and addictiveness. The 3-D playing board is a great idea and the way the little pod hops from one block to another is very smooth. Each block does something different and there are almost endless ways of completing the game so you can never get bored. The only thing that I found irritated me in Sophistry **was the way the game went back to the title screen after you have left each board. I found this totally unnecessary. A special key that took you back would have worked just as well, if not better. Blocks that disappear when you touch them add an element of frustration to the game but this makes it even more fun when trying to correct your steps next time round.** Sophistry **is bursting with addictiveness just waiting to pounce out at any unsuspecting game buyer, watch out for it! "**
NICK

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: great 3-D perspective creates an involving atmosphere. Despite the small size of the characters they are superbly drawn and animated
Sound: no tunes, but a wide range of impressive spot effects during the game
Options: definable keys
General rating: a puzzling game, requiring quick and logical thinking, as well as a degree of risk. Its only infuriating fault is returning to the main menu after completing a screen

Presentation	86%
Graphics	80%
Playability	93%
Addictive qualities	91%
OVERALL	**90%**

DISPOSABLE HEROES

Producer: **The Power House**
Retail price: **£1.99**
Author: **Grant Jaquest**

The Mega Garbage Beings are on the rampage again, and are holed up in caverns beneath the city, along with their equally vile companions.

It is into this dank, unfriendly environment that our brave hero travels and there are ten Garbage Beings to tackle throughout the underground labyrinth. Other strange creatures also wander around and while contact with them is not fatal, a chunk of the player's energy is lost. A stun gun is provided which temporarily paralyses them.

Once a Garbage Being has been located, the hero can then challenge the despicable creature in mind-to-mind combat. The screen consists of four squares, and is played like a simplified version of 'Simon Says': a light flashes across the panel and the routine must be copied exactly to win the game.

Success is rewarded with control of the Garbage Being's mind, who can then be forced to return to the garbage dump. Once all of the Beings have been rounded up in this manner, the world is safe once more.



CRITICISM

● *" If there's one thing I can't stand in a game it's poor graphics AND a terrible use of colour – as far as I'm concerned this kills a product stone dead. If a game isn't attractive then who's going to bother inflicting it on their eyes regularly ? Not me, for one.* Disposable Heroes *requires too much luck to be considered overly thought provoking; after only five or six games the lack of addictive qualities failed to entice me into any repeat performances. All things considered, the title is very apt. "*
PAUL

● " I had hoped that *Dervish* was an unhappy hiccup in the system, but no, *Disposable Heroes* – the second Power House offering this month – is just as bad. It's slightly better, graphically, but still plays like a lead balloon. The main character sprite is an odd looking chap, reminiscent of a one-legged egg on a snow ski. After I stopped laughing at this unlikely hero, I steadily grew more and more annoyed at the extremely simplistic gameplay which had me bored rigid within a few sessions. Once a Garbage Being is located a simple form of the 'Simon Says' game is used to force it back to the garbage dump. If you ask me that is precisely where this game belongs. "
MARK

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: poor use of colour with flickery characters
Sound: not outstanding – but suits the game
General rating: a idea with good potential, ruined by shoddy programming

Presentation	29%
Graphics	48%
Playability	23%
Addictive qualities	20%
OVERALL	**22%**

DERVISH

Producer: **The Power House**
Retail price: **£1.99**
Author: **John Keneally**

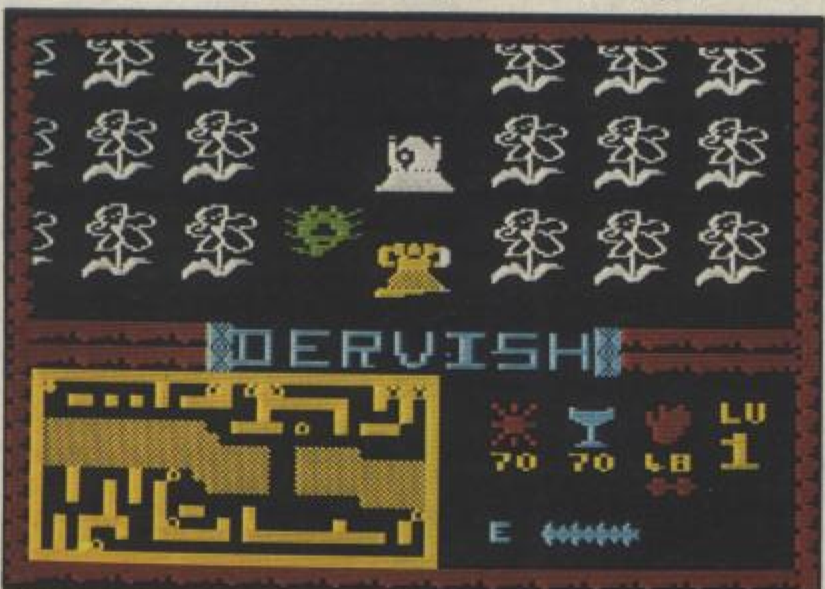
Treading the Dervish path to enlightenment involves a great deal of magic and mystique. The Power House provides the player with a chance to test magical skills as he battles through eight exhausting levels in an attempt to reach the Upward Path.

The quest takes place across a landscape of labyrinthine walls and vegetation. Choosing Explore mode allows a survey of the environment with no loss of energy, prior to embarking in Normal mode. The Dervish path is followed in the company of a series of hostile characters who attempt to hinder progress and drain the player's energy by bodily obstruction.

These are combatted by three types of weapon (light, water and brimstone) which have varying effects on different creatures. Spells, keys and potions are also collected to further the quest.

Weapon and spell supplies can be replenished at Alms Houses, represented by a diamond symbol. Entering one of these sees a cursor pass at random below a series of options, and pressing fire allows the selection of necessary supplies.

A map can be called up to show current position, while status displays indicate the type and amount of weapons left.



CRITICISM

● " Treading the Dervish path, collecting spells and choosing weapons from a random selection – the gameplay is very similar to Firebird's *Druid* (a SMASH just over a year ago). There, however, the similarity ends. Uninspiring graphics give little incentive to explore; one landscape of scribbled flowers is much like another and soon begins to hurt your eyes. The Dervish hero spinning round and round like a top (similar to the Warner Brothers cartoon character) incites no sympathy at all. Unless you choose the Explore option, your energy depletes very rapidly; considering the lack of playability, this is probably a blessing in disguise. "
KATI

● *" Graphically,* Dervish *may look quite appealing from a distance (say five miles), but when each character is examined closely it reveals itself to be crudely drawn, out of proportion and with flickery animation. The sound is no better, limiting itself to a simple tune with very few spot effects – most unimpressive. I will, however, compliment the programmer on the smooth scrolling – it may only be half the screen, but it's well done. You can forget any addictive qualities, however – it has none. It does have an Explore mode, though, allowing you to see most of the game without being any good at it! The whole product is very disappointing; I wish this was an exception to The Power House's rule – sadly it's not. "*
PAUL

COMMENTS

Joysticks: none
Graphics: close inspection of the characters reveals little detail and flickery animation
Sound: simple tune with similar spot effects
General rating: as a freebie it would be disappointing

Presentation	23%
Graphics	24%
Playability	18%
Addictive qualities	15%
OVERALL	**19%**

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KARNOV



An ostrich a day keeps the skeletons away

Producer: **Electric Dreams**
Retail price: **£9.99**
Authors: **Mr Micro, from a Data East coin-op**

Karnov's burly form has been a familiar figure in the arcades for some time, and now the Russian firebreather is making his dazzling debut on the Spectrum conversion of the Data East coin-op. His hazardous quest is simply to destroy the dastardly dragon Ryu and recover the lost treasures of Babylon.

Following the selection of a one or two player option, there is a theatrical flash of lightning and the bulky figure of Karnov appears. His adventure takes place over nine multiloaded levels across a horizontally scrolling eastern environment of sandstone pillars, exotic buildings, swirling rivers and bubbling volcanoes.

The unfriendly inhabitants of this strange and hostile land range from the bizarre (flying fish, jumping jacks, ostrich riding skeletons) to the more familiar (dinosaurs, fireflies and sabre-swinging arabs). Contact with any of these means the loss of one of five lives.

Karnov's basic weapon can be improved by collecting extra firepower. Other bonus icons include ladders, boomerangs, 'superboots', for extra jumping ability, flippers, power pills and wings. Once collected these are displayed on a panel at the base of the screen and activated at will via the keyboard. Status displays indicate time remaining, current score and number of lives left.

Each level can be negotiated using a number of different routes which involve swimming and flying (using the appropriate bonus objects) as well as the more orthodox method of walking and jumping. A particularly large enemy has to be defeated at the end of each section before Karnov can move his bulky body on to the next.

Having negotiated eight gruelling levels, the colossal cossack faces the final challenge of combat with the wizard. Stripped of all his bonus items and restricted to single fire power Karnov meets his greatest challenger yet.

KATI

" Karnov, hefty hero of the arcades, appears in a dazzlingly colourful conversion. The sprites are carefully animated (Karnov's climbing actions are particularly impressive) and as much shading as possible has been crammed into the detailed backdrops. Numerous exotic aliens and carefully drawn landscapes create a suitably weird and wonderful atmosphere. With several different ways of completing each level and plenty of bonus objects to collect the game has enough substance to keep the most reluctant Russians playing for some time. Defeating the toughest aliens requires brain as well as brawn; success involves using the right bonus icon at the right time. It's just a pity that smoothness of control has been sacrificed to the complex use of colour. Karnov's jumping movements are slightly jerky and scrolling slows down while he is up in the air. The gameplay, although still enjoyable, doesn't quite match up to the high expectations invited by the graphics. Still – despite these limitations Karnov **is an enjoyable and addictive game. "**

NICK

" If you're looking for a great shoot 'em up that's challenging and has good graphics then look no further: Karnov **has it all. The characters are excellently drawn as are all the backgrounds; there's even a colourful, detailed map of Wonderland on display while each level loads in. Electric Dreams have done a great job in making the game colourful while avoiding the majority of attribute problems. My only moan is that the game slows down terribly when more and more nasties arrive on-screen and this slight fault does tend to make the game unplayable if you don't kill them all quickly. Each level holds many surprises and the baddies get increasingly more menacing as you progress. I loaded up one of the last levels of the game and didn't survive for more than a couple of seconds! The sound effects are very basic but there are a few nice ones on the lightning and some of the other obstructions.** Karnov **should appeal to all those gamesters out there who just like to blast everything in sight! "**



Fire breathing *Karnov* : a bad case of halitosis really

PAUL

" So this is the legendary Karnov – he of the hot tonsils. Well I can't say he's lit any candles in my life. Karnov **may well have outstanding graphics and colour, but it's what you do with them that counts – and Electric Dreams (in the form of Mr Micro) have done very little. The scrolling backgrounds are terribly jerky and the more hectic the action, the slower the game becomes. This ruins the whole feel of a potentially fast action arcade game.** Karnov **fails to make the impact of such arcade conversions as** Bubble Bobble **due to its lack of playability – the game is absolutely no fun to play at all. The screenshots may look fantastic and out of this world, but don't be seduced by looks; this is merely a poor game heavily disguised. "**

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Sinclair
Graphics: well designed backgrounds and characters. Packed with colour and limited clash – but VERY slow
Sound: extremely basic spot effects and tune (only heard on loading)
Options: one or two players (the second player didn't work on our finished version, however, so check it out first!)
General rating: it looks lovely, but the slow and unresponsive gameplay kills much of the potential *Karnov* had

Presentation	77%
Graphics	84%
Playability	66%
Addictive qualities	73%
OVERALL	**76%**

FANZINE FILE



DOMINIC HANDY peruses the latest amateur Spectrum review journals

I **ONLY** had to mention the lack of a desktop-publishing package on the Spectrum in the last FANZINE FILE (Issue 50) and immediately in came a press release from Cardex Software claiming the existence of one for the Spectrum. *Word-Master* is the core of the system with text editing, graphics and multiple file handling facilities. It's predominantly designed to create documents with incorporated graphics and for fanzines its capabilities can be increased with two extension programs. *Typeliner* adds full page layout facilities and a variety of fonts, and *Headliner* is a graphic design package.

As yet there are no versions which take advantage of the extra memory of the 128K computers, but plans which should allow users to upgrade are in the pipeline. All programs are compatible with popular disk interfaces and Sinclair microdrives. If you already have a word processor, text files can be converted for use with *Word-Master* and *Typeliner*.

Word-Master retails at £14.95, *Typeliner* at £10.50 and *Headliner* at £7.95. All are available direct from Cardex at *3 Barton Street, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria LA14 2EP*. A fully Spectrum-produced fanzine may at last be possible; but until then we'll just have to stick with the anthology of hand-typed, written and drawn zines currently available . . .

I first looked at ***Zapper*** in the last FANZINE FILE – I only had it's first issue to hand then – and I can tell you it was pretty dire. However, things have improved tremendously since then. Like most fanzines nowadays *Zapper* has decided to publish its didactic deliberations in A5 format. From a reader's point of view, this is much easier to handle and also seems better value for money – after all, you should be getting more pages (or more condensed text). Apparently the decision to change to the smaller format was made after a long talk with Intermediates' PR man, Dave Carlos. Ironically, the same Dave Carlos who, a couple of months back, announced that Intermediates would not be sending out any more review copies to ANY fanzine. Flicking through the pages of most fanzines (in particular ***Specscene***) this seems to have caused quite a stir. But not to worry, as they no longer handle the accounts of Domark and Grand Slam (formerly Argus Press Software) – who *were* their largest clients – it shouldn't really affect many fanzines.

The new *Zapper* is about a 200% improvement over the old. It's packed full of software reviews (18 in Issue 6), contains a fair amount of video coverage (7 films are reviewed) and a small section of tips – not forgetting the obligatory charts. Due to the large amount of games covered (most fanzines only cover around ten) *Zapper* is the ideal companion to take into the shop as a very quick and simple guide to the current software on the shelves. Layout, although improved, is still a problem for the Hertford-based publication. The text is not always straight on the pages and the Letraset (every artist's friend) is not used as much as it could be (often replaced by hand-written titles). Another thing that *Zapper* lacks is an award of some kind (like a CRASH Smash). This often helps a confused buyer decide what to buy.

Pictures are always favourites with fanzines, and often their downfall, due to the quality. But quality of reproduction isn't *Zapper's problem: basically there are too many of them. The writing suffers from being shortened and the borders of the pictures (drawn with a felt pen) are very fuzzy and often wonky. However, at the 25p cover price (+ 25p if posting) it's pleasing to read and you won't feel out of pocket.*

FUTURE PUBLISHING

Next out of the fanzine file (with newly fitted extension to cope with the influx of prestigious publications) comes ***Future Games*** with its inaugral issue at a risky 50p starting price. There's no stopping Lee Widdows, the editor, when it comes to using the Letraset style. There's a plethora of different cut-out styles and sizes – some work and some don't – but it does give the organ some sort of professional look (although I can't quite say what). As with most zines it's started off in A4 format (although it could easily be reduced without any loss of clarity) and thus contains many blank spaces. Photocopy quality is very good, with absolutely no misty pages or strange lines which come from setting the wrong exposure. Most reviews are only about 150 words long so they don't really give you much idea of the reviewer's impressions or the storyline – pictures and artwork take up most of the space.

Future Games has obviously had influences from many magazines and the mix generally work quite well. I look forward to future issues.

The future is one thing that ***Spectacle*** need have no worries about. It's now into Issue 14 and is still going as strong as ever, and still costs 50p, which is quite amazing if you look at the quality of the paper (especially the coloured cardboard cover). *Spectacle* claims to be a magazine (as opposed to fanzine) and, when looking at the professional way the writers tackle every subject, you can see why. Sadly only one picture is printed for each review, but, like the writing it is of high quality. There did seem to be a great amount of blank space – even to the degree of having a 'Notes' page at the back. The reviews may not always be up-to-date but they are always comprehensive and informative, making *Spectacle* one of the best monthly zines.

AND THEN THERE WERE THREE

Genesis – the birth of a new fanzine. I've only got an old copy before me, their first, so I can't comment on what succeeding issues are like. Even so, *Genesis* covers a wide range of subjects – arcades, news, software/hardware reviews and hints 'n' tips – but contains few quality screenshots. It's produced on an Amstrad home computer, using *Mini Office* with an Epson printer and covers Amstrad, Spectrum and Sega formats. I only wish I'd been able to get my hands on a later copy – it *could be* very good.

What's this I see, The Times? No, it's ***The Spectrum Times***. After starting with A5 format they seemed to have switched (unlike other zines) to the larger A4 format. It has to be said that *The Spectrum Times* now represents bad value for money – Issue Four only consisted of three sheets of paper! And even those three sheets are poorly photocopied. But remember, it's not the winning it's the taking part.

CPU is typical of many fanzines in sales figures with around 150 readers, but that's where the similarities stop. It contains on average 36 to 40 fun-packed pages and has all the usual features of every magazine on the market. Most of the pages are produced on typewriters – these are of very good quality – but come from an Alphacom printer, and the decline of quality shows. Even though the reproduction of the pictures is high the layout people have restrained themselves and not used too many screenshots. I particularly liked the 'Hot Hit' spreads which cover the game in great detail and give it good coverage – the arcade section is also informative, but too short.

CPU only covers the Spectrum at the moment, although there seems to be a running debate on whether they should cover the Commodore 64. For a relatively new magazine it's very impressive.

Also with around 40 pages comes the first issue of ***DIM***. Although the photos are attractive it would be much more effective if they were incorporated in the text. Each left-hand page review is then followed by a right-hand page of pictures – not very inspiring, but it certainly keeps to a style. The Hints and Tips section is very small – only a page – but the style is short and sweet. Most of the major Commodore and Spectrum games are reviewed (Amiga coverage coming soon), although only a quarter of the total review space is used for critique and review purposes. PBM and wargames are well covered.

The final update this month is ***Microphobia*** from Garstang in Lancashire. Please note that the price of the fourth and latest issue is 40p. It's still full of spurious waffle from its editor Saf and well worth the experience. Don't expect any screenshots, though.

More from the Fanzine File when we receive more fanzines. Editors please note!

Zapper: ***26 London Road, Hertford Heath, Hertfordshire SG13 7PN 25p*** + 25p postage per issue, payable to Chris Legget.

Specscene: *85 Kipling Way, Stowmarket, Suffolk IP14 1TS* 30p and an SAE per issue, payable to Andrew Steel.

Future Games: *4 Friars Avenue, Shenfield, Brentwood, Essex CM15 8HY* 50p per issue, payable to Lee Widdows.

Spectacle: *20 Monins Road, Dover, Kent CT17 9NX* 50p per issue payable to Paul Bowman.

Genesis: *11 Sunny Brow Road, Archer Park, Middleton, Manchester M24 4AD* 35p per issue, payable to S Finnegan.

The Spectrum Times: *St Anthony's, Westfield Road, Dereham, Norfolk NR19 1JB* 20p per issue, payable to S Turner.

DIM: *57 Lodge Road, Scunthorpe, South Humberside DN15 7EN* 60p per issue, payable to David West.

Microphobia: *Woodtop, Goosmargh, Preston, Lancashire PR3 2ER* 40p and an SAE per issue, payable to Dave Kelsall.

CPU: *63 Avondale Road, Edgely, Stockport, Cheshire SK3 9NY* 30p + 20p postage per issue, payable to Hamayoum Choudry.

COMPETITION

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THANKS TO CRL AND SOPHISTRY



Bet you didn't know that the title of CRL's latest game, *Sophistry*, derives from the ancient Greek term applied to a group of professional rhetoric teachers, popularly known as the sophists. Budding Greek orators were taught the art of twisting words and spinning out the many disputations and discussions that formed a staple part of Greek political life.

Fortunately, knowledge of Greek politics and public speaking are totally useless skills when it comes to taking part in our competition. Sophistry has so many complex elements that it demands extraordinary feats of mental agility to complete. Just in case you're not feeling in tip-top shape, we've devised a mildly intelligent quiz to get those little grey cells into action and raring to go. All you have to do to get your grubby hands on the incredibly advanced Saisho STV 990 (a stereo, radio cassette and TV all rolled into one) is complete four words beginning with the prefix 'soph'. A list of transparently obvious clues is given below. To prevent you from rushing off to the dictionary and sending off your entry in ten seconds flat we've included a devious tie-breaker; in the incredibly likely event of there being hundreds of correct solutions, the winner will be the one who thinks of the most imaginative, original, and hopefully humorous name for the pod that hops from square to square in *Sophistry*. Completed solutions should be sent to **CRL SAY SO COMP, CRASH,** *PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire, SY8 1DB*.

The **overall winner** receives a Saisho STV 990; **second prize** is a Saisho PS27SP personal stereo cassette player with speakers. **Top prize winners** and **fifty** runners-up win a copy of *Sophistry* itself.

1 *An American teenager's second year.*
2 *Worldly-wise, highly developed, urbane.*
3 *A Greek philosopher or a mistaken reasoner.*
4 *An incredibly famous ancient playwright and tragedian.*

My choice of name for the hopping Sophistry pod is ....

Entries must be received by June 7 and as usual the decision of the appointed CRASH judges is final in all respects.

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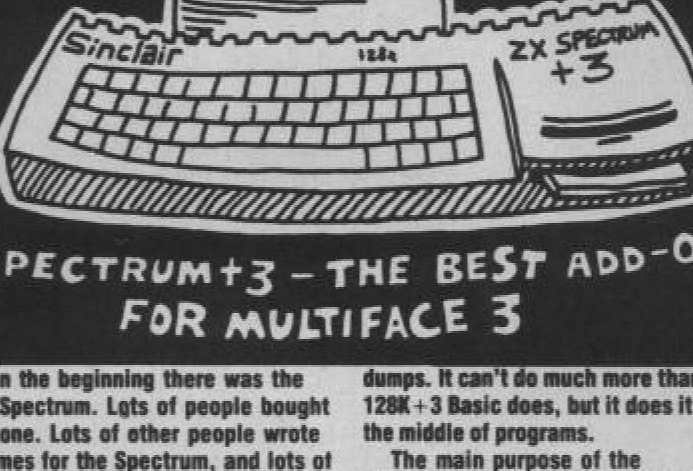
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1988 – THE YEAR OF THE ROBOT



SPECTRUM+3 – THE BEST ADD-ON FOR MULTIFACE 3

NOW YOU HAVE

"A GOOD REASON TO BUY SPECTRUM+3:" (Crash)

multiface three

"THE PLUS 3 DISC SOLUTION" (Sinclair User)

In the beginning there was the Spectrum. Lots of people bought one. Lots of other people wrote games for the Spectrum, and lots of people bought those as well.

But there was a snag – everything used cassette tapes, which were fine for *Depeche Mode* but not for so hot for computer software. Slow, unreliable and frustrating were some of the kinder terms used for the medium.

Now there's the 128K+3, a games machine that has all its software on tape and built in disc drive . . . Guess what Romantic Robot has produced?

Multiface 3, that's what. Plug it into your 128K+3, and load a game from tape. Press the red button and you can port it on to disc at any stage, yours to load in a trice at a whim's notice. Multiface works by waiting for the program to load and run. Then it takes a copy, and as the program was running at the time, it will run when the copy is loaded back later.

The tape to disc function of the Multiface 3 would be enough to recommend it to anyone. But there's more. When the red button is pressed, a whole range of functions appears. You can look through the 128K+3's memory, altering it at will. High scores have never been so easy to obtain. Memory can be displayed as hexadecimal, decimal or text. All of the 128K+3's 128K of Ram can be fiddled with, not just the 48K's worth that Basic has access to.

You can also print out areas of memory and screens in a variety of different forms. The Multiface 3 can do the same types of graphics dumps as its brother Multiprint, straight text, Spectrum-style *Copy* and a couple of shaded screen dumps. It can't do much more than 128K+3 Basic does, but it does it in the middle of programs.

The main purpose of the Multiface is to get things on to disc. As well as the simple *Save* and *Load*, it's got a few other tricks up its interface. You can, for example, use the disc from 48K mode. Lots of people get excited by this.

Other things that the Multiface can do is allow you to erase a file to make room on a disc, in case you need to save something in mid-game and can't get to Basic to do the deed. You can't *Format* a disc from the Multiface, alas.

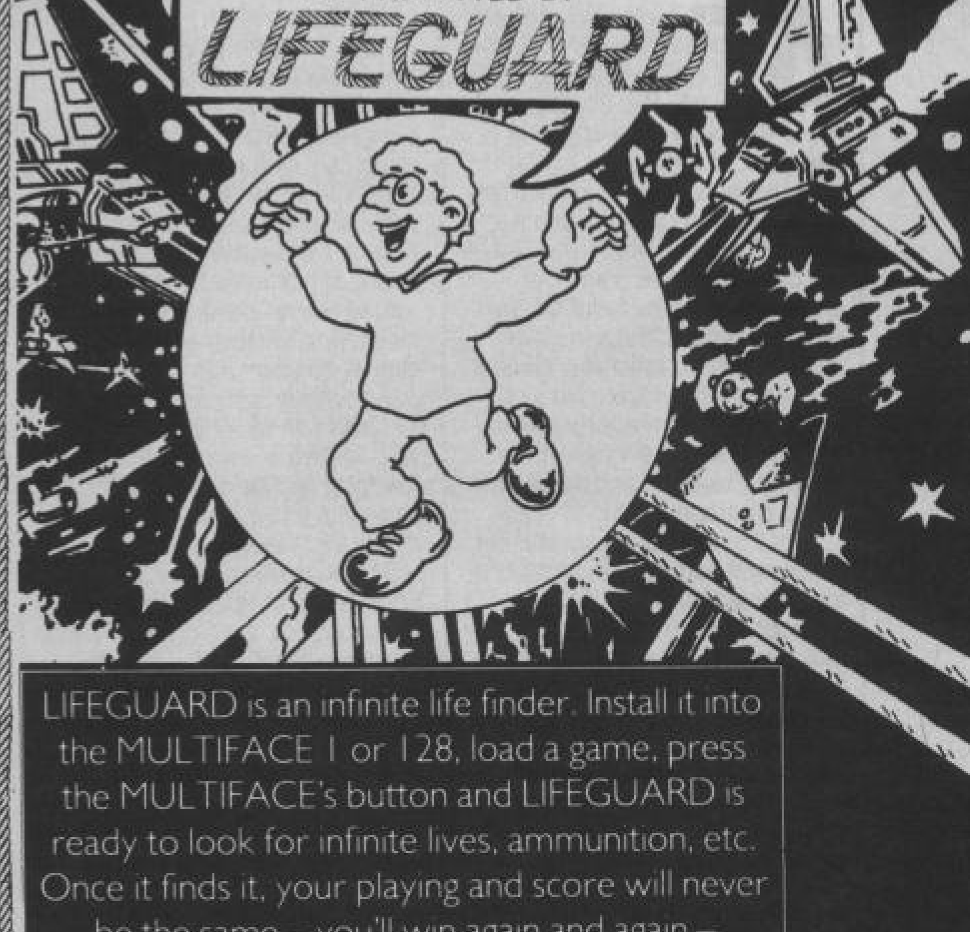
Multiface also compresses stuff automatically, and doesn't *Save* empty areas of memory. These two features mean that you can get (for example) more than three games on the 170-odd K allowed you per disc side. But you can turn those features off, if need be.

Everything is accessed by the traditional one- or two-line menu and single keypresses. Multiface 3 is very careful about invalid inputs, and didn't crash or otherwise misbehave at all. And I did try to confuse it.

More than that, what can I say? I enjoy a good rant, most reviewers do, but the Multiface 3 seems set on continuing the Romantic Robot tradition of doing the job reliably. I can't even complain a little.

Any 128K+3 owner will find it a wonderful device, indispensible even – I'm not giving mine back without a fight. I expect to see the usual extra programs appear for the best in due course (Genie et al), whereupon not owning a Multiface 3 will brand one a complete loser■

EXCERPTS FROM REVIEW IN



LIFEGUARD is an infinite life finder. Install it into the MULTIFACE 1 or 128, load a game, press the MULTIFACE's button and LIFEGUARD is ready to look for infinite lives, ammunition, etc. Once it finds it, your playing and score will never be the same – you'll win again and again –

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ET AL

GOGGLE!

FAST FORWARD INTO THE FUTURE



DOMINIC HANDY on video

AFTER seeing ***Spaceballs*** at the cinema last month I just can't wait for its video release. Mel Brooks's farcical story of intergalactical mayhem contains many hilarious sketches which film buffs will appreciate – there's a great bit in a bar where they meet the crew from *Aliens* and the encounter on *The Planet Of The Apes* is hilarious. Even the imminent video release is given a plug – with the video used as a reference aid for the actors during the film. Anyway, enough of the cinematic releases and on with the home entertainment.

I hate to sound pessimistic but the current batch of videos waiting for release aren't the best of previous months. That's not to say that there aren't any good films – there are. It's just that there's an abundance of bad. Still, watch out for these . . .

RCA/Columbia have just released an array of great hire videos. Fans of *Max Headroom* – star of the technological age – will be pleased to hear that he's finally reached the video cassette in series form. It's not the wild 'n' whacky Max of the Channel 4 music/chat show, though. Nor is it the film, *Twenty Minutes Into The Future*, recently screened on TV. ***Max Headroom Volumes 1, 2*** and ***3*** (RCA/Columbia, 15) are set in a futuristic *Bladerunner*-type environment. The same main characters appear, and much of the same dialogue is used, but these three cassettes total almost five hours of viewing time, whereas the film is just over an hour long (and finishes VERY abruptly).

As I mentioned last month, also released on April 29 are ***Radio Days*** (RCA/Columbia, PG), which is well worth getting for something a bit different (aren't all **Woody Allen** films?), ***Foreign Body*** and ***Roxanne***. The latter stars the wonderful **Steve Martin** who brings any film to life, especially when he's written the script, as here. Those of you who can remember the 1950 classic *Cyrano De Bergerac* will see a strong similarity between the two – **José Ferrer** picked up an Oscar for playing the long-nosed lover almost 40 years ago.

America's *Saturday Night Live* TV show has spawned many a film star – Steve Martin, **Eddie Murphy** and **Dan Aykroyd** to name but a few. That talented trio star in CIC Video's latest batch of sell-through titles, all for £9.99. Eddie Murphy and Dan Aykroyd star alongside each other in **John Landis**'s ***Trading Places*** (CIC Video, 15). The story of a ludicrous bet between two millionares, played by **Ralph Bellamy** and **Don Ameche**, on how a person from the ghetto (Murphy) would cope in the position of a corporate company – and vice versa. However, someone else must also swap places and Aykroyd is the man who suddenly finds himself out of a job and living off the streets. A super release, well overdue, as is Steve Martin's ***The Jerk*** (CIC Video, 15)!

Martin portrays the title role of a terminally stupid young man whose crazy inventions take him from rags to riches, and back to rags again. It was his first full-feature role (back in 1979), and he went on to produce (although not star in) the TV version, *The Jerk Too*.

Talking of such sequential, and contrived, titles, ***Teen Wolf Too*** (Entertainment In Video, PG) has just reached the shelves. The cousin of the original Teen Wolf (originally played by **Michael J Fox**) enters university and wants to be treated as a normal student – not easy when your relations have pointed ears and hairy hands, and everyone is trying to bring out the REAL you. Little do the students realise that tricking Todd Howard (**Jason Bateman**) into dancing with the campus queen can do nothing else but turn him into a werewolf – try explaining *that* to your biology student girlfriend! Strangely, (well, not for America I suppose) his outlook on life changes for the better. Girls swarm about him, and guys respect him – he's cool. But Todd's still not happy with his hairy lot in life . . .

One chap who had no trouble attracting members of the opposite sex was ***The Woo Woo Kid*** (Guild Home Video, PG). **Patrick Dempsey** stars in the true story (the original *Kid*, Sonny Wisecarver, introduces the film, 'Hell, I was just like any other kid my age') of a young teenager who is attracted to older women, but sadly plagued by press attention. Especially when he marries one, who is subsequently arrested for kidnapping him! However, Sonny soon finds the right women in the form of **Beverly d'Angelo** (*Every Which Way But Loose*), playing a 25-year-old – much nearer his own age of 14! *The Woo Woo Kid* enters town on May 26 – so warn your Mum.

Mums everywhere had better put that date in their diary as **Tom Conti**'s latest video release, ***Beyond Therapy*** (New World Video, 15), also comes out on that date. Acclaimed director Robert Altman, the man behind ***M ★ A ★ S ★ H***, guides the confusing action along its medical route. Conti plays Prudence's therapist, **Glenda Jackson** is Bruce's psychotherapist and **Jeff Goldblum** is Bruce. When Bruce meets Prudence, through a personal ad in a paper, he reveals he is bi-sexual. Understandably Prudence is upset and confused. They both go running to their therapists – whose offices are fatally next to each other. But it's not a simple as that. The therapists have other ideas for their clients . . .

Ishtar (RCA/Columbia, PG) was one of the most talked about films of 1987. Not because of its ridiculous storyline or awful music, but because of its sheer bad value for money. The two stars, **Dustin Hoffman** and **Warren Beatty**, were rewarded six million dollars apiece for the roles – it should have been compensation. Although, *Ishtar*'s not as bad as the all-too-quick-to-criticise American critics would have us believe. There ARE laughs (and **Isabelle Adjani**), but not 12 million dollars' worth. Anyway, you should be able to get it now.

Looking further into the future, as is always possible with Warner Home Video since they plan well ahead, there's plenty to be happy about from the end of May to the end of June. Soon we should be seeing the muscular bulk of **Dolph Lundgren** in ***Masters Of The Universe***; **Jack Nicholson** with a trio of beautiful ladies (**Cher**, **Michelle Pfeiffer** and **Susan Sarandon**) in ***The Witches Of Eastwick*** and **Dennis Quaid** with **Martin Short** in **Joe Dante**'s ***Innerspace*** – all from Warner. All three are well worth seeing, but will appeal to very different tastes.



SKALLAGRIGG

William Horwood
Penguin Books £4.50, 728pp

ARTHUR suffers from cerebral palsy – he's a spastic – but the time is 1927 when, at age seven, he's committed to a mental hospital and left to the untender mercies of medical ignorance and nursing cruelty – some 50 years before his condition will be recognised and properly understood. Handicapped beyond hope and forgotten, he pathetically calls out the one word he knows: Skallagrigg . . .

Esther Marquand is also a spastic, but with the computer technology of the Eighties, she is able to communicate; in fact she is one of the world's leading computer game programmers. She's also an avid collector of stories told to each other by handicapped people throughout Britain – and they nearly all tell of an Arthur, his friends Frank, Norman and Eppie and a mysterious, godlike presence called the Skallagrigg.

Bit by bit, aided by her mongol friend Tom and her father's wealth, Esther pieces together these stories until she alone realises they form a pattern – a cry for help passed along the decades. How she tracks down Arthur and discovers the astonishing identity of the Skallagrigg, against a background of struggling to prove her own intelligence, forms a highly original and moving tale from the bestselling author of ***Duncton Wood***.

But Horwood's real coup lies in the cry for help that Esther herself leaves buried within the depths of her role-playing/adventure game masterpiece, *Skallagrigg*. Computers and games are at the very centre of the novel, but, as we say about so many games, it requires some perseverance at the start and then rewards enormously.

CRASH ZX SPECTRUM

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SWAP 128 *Elite* for 128 *Tai-Pan.* Write to R. Dostmohamed, *19 Dagmar Road, Wood Green, London, N22 4RT.*

SOFTWARE EXCHANGE CLUB. Swap your used programs. Free membership, huge program base. This is the original club, often imitated, never beaten. Spectrum, CBM 64, Atari ST. S.A.E please to: UKSEC, *15 Tunwell Greave, Sheffield S5 9GB.*

I WILL SWAP *Way Of The Tiger* and *Commando* for *The Great Escape* and *Indoor Sports.* Phone: 08772 208 and ask for David.

WANTED *GUNSHIP.* Will give *Rambo* and *Space Hunter* or *Video Olympics.* Write to: Nalishad Husain, *18 Pelewura Way, Apapa, Lagos, Nigeria.*

SWAP LOTS of games including *They Stole A Million, 6-Pak, Five Star* etc. Want *Yankee* and *Waterloo* and any other good games (please). Phone: 0922 25006 after 6pm and ask for Gaz.

SWAP *Everyone's A Wally* for *Grange Hill, Sir Fred* for *The Young Ones, Wizard's Warrior* for 2 issues of CRASH, numbers 7 and 11. Phone: 0908 616636.

WANTED *Elite* will swap for any two of these games: *Jack The Nipper, Underwurlde, Wheelie, Firelord, Paperboy, Masters Of The Universe* and *The Eidolon.* Phone: Rafid Salman 0554 75649.

WANTED MULTIFACE 1 will swap 4 of the following: *He-Man, Impossaball, Top Gun, Tarzan, V, Gunfright* and *Marsport.* Must be in good condition. All original. Tel: 0789 773739 and ask for David.

SWAP MY *Slap Fight* and *Beach Head* for *Centurions.* Phone: Omagh 47898 any time between 4pm and 6pm and ask for Barry.

128K MUSIC WANTED. Is anyone programming music? I do! Please write to me. Also 600 games to swap. Frank Bours, *Tollensstraat 23, Heerlen, 6416 VG, Holland.*

ADVENTURE EXCHANGE CLUB. When you've finished an adventure don't let it gather dust. Swap it for another one. Free membership. Details from: S.A.E.C, *4 Kilmartin Lane, Carluke, Lanarkshire ML8 5RT.*

TITLES LIKE *Zoids, Lightforce, Ghosts 'N' Goblins, Bobby Bearing* and budget games. Wanted are *Quazatron* and *Starglider.* Send a S.A.E. to: Dawsoft, *26 Holwood Drive, Chorlton, Manchester M16 8WJ* for a list.

I AM A 15-year-old Speccy user who wants to swap games with a boy or girl aged 14-16. Send me a list and all will be replied to. All latest titles available. Austin Scamloy, *157 Marigold Street, Dundale, Dublin, Ireland.*

SWAP *Heavy On The Magick* by Gargoyle Games for *Gauntlet.* Originals only. Please write to: Karl Butcher, *4 Greenleas, Thundersley, Benfleet, Essex SS7 3UL.*

SOFTWARE WANTED

WANTED TO BUY: *Spy Vs Spy, Archon, Saboteur, Valkyrie.* All complete packages and all good condition only! Offers to: Falk Steins, *Am Siterhof 83, Moenchengladbach 5, 4050, West Germany.*

PLEASE HELP ME!! I'm going mad! I need *Zig Zag* by DK'Tronics. Must be in good condition, will swap for cash. Contact: David Crank, *103 Upholland Road, Billinge, near Wigan, Lancs WN5 7JH.* Hurry!

WANTED *Sam Fox Strip Poker,* will swap *Gunfright, Ping Pong, Mikie, Tournament Leader Board, It's A Knockout* or *Konami's Golf.* Write to: Mark Cox, *32 Killin Road, Darlington, Co Durham, DL1 3PD.*

WANTED *Starglider* 128. Will swap for *Dyra Curse, Fist 2, Starstrike 2* and *Light Force.* Phone: 041 762 3791. Ask for Chris.

WANTED *Bubble Bobble.* Will swap for one of the following: *Zynaps, Exolon, Wizball, Temple Of Doom, The Big Sleaze.* I also want *Tai-Pan.* Phone 061 903 0339.

OTHERS

HELP! I know a bit of machine code and want to program games. I need help, tips, routines, etc. Write to: Joe Pairman, *The Rectory, Hawkchurch, Axminster, Devon, EX13 5XD.* Free program!

SOMEBODY OUT THERE must know how to complete *Never Ending Story* from Spook City. If so please write to: Karl Harrison, *89 Queens Park Road, Heywood, Lancs OL10 4JR.*

VOTE FOR THE CHARTS

HOW TO VOTE FOR YOUR FAVOURITE GAMES: give each of your top five games for the HOTLINE, ADVENTURE and STRATEGY charts a mark out of ten — the better the game, the higher the mark.

ADVENTURE CHART

TITLE **MARK OUT OF TEN**

1 ....
2 ....
3 ....
4 ....
5 ....

Name ....
Address ....
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.... Postcode ....

T-shirt size [ ]
This is the £40 of software I'd like if I win first prize, but I know some games are unavailable and CRASH can't promise anything ....
....
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Send this voting form to: **CRASH ADVENTURE CHART, *PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB***

HOTLINE CHART

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Send this voting form to: **CRASH HOTLINE CHART, *PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB***

STRATEGY CHART

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Send this voting form to: **CRASH STRATEGY CHART, *PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB***

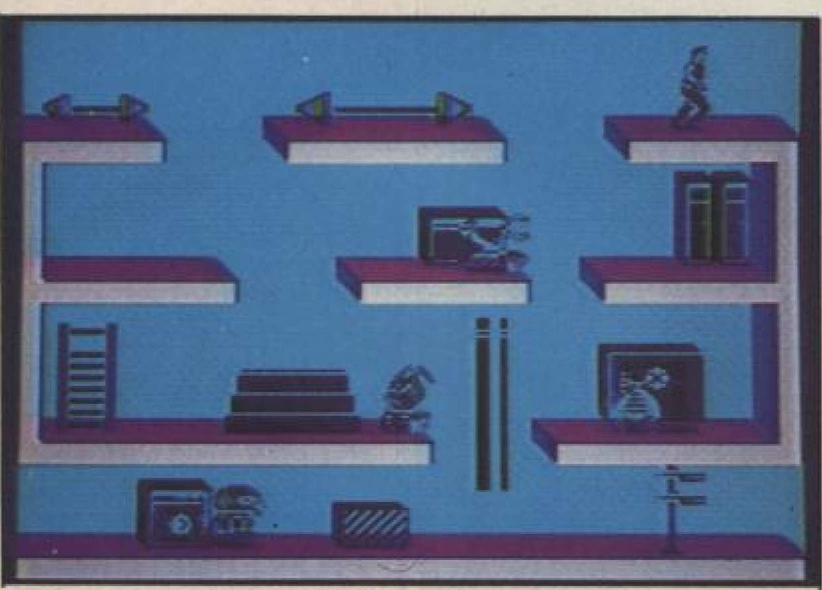
PREVIEW

Coming soon to a Spectrum near you!

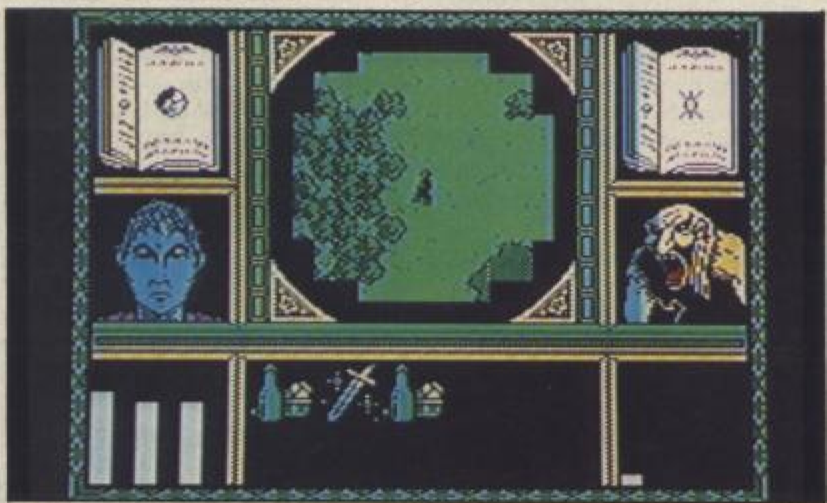
SUMMER SLUMP

SUMMER may not have reached Britain yet but it sure looks like the software industry is going to be hitting the summer blues soon. For years summer has always been the worst time of the year for computer games buying, and subsequently all the producers of full-price software tend to go quiet for a couple of months before the big build up to the PC Show in September.

However, there are still some releases to look forward to: the Birmingham-based producers of All American Software, **US Gold** have got a little gem up their sleeves just waiting to be launched upon the game-hungry public. ***Charlie Chaplin*** is promoted as a 'Totally unique game with a whole new concept', and puts you in the seat of the producer, director and financier of the silent star.



► **Coming very soon:** *Impossible Mission II* **from US Gold/Epyx**



► **Mysterious magic and evil wizards in US Gold's** *Wizard Warz*

This has got to be one of the oldest licences to come from US Gold. Chaplin, who was born in 1889, first appeared at the London Hippodrome in 1900 and was discovered by Max Sennet on a theatre tour in America – he then joined Keystone. He made his first film in 1913, *Making A Living*, and succeeded it by making an incredible 35 films in 1914 – a truly prolific film star. If the computer game can come close to the real thing then we're surely in for a treat.

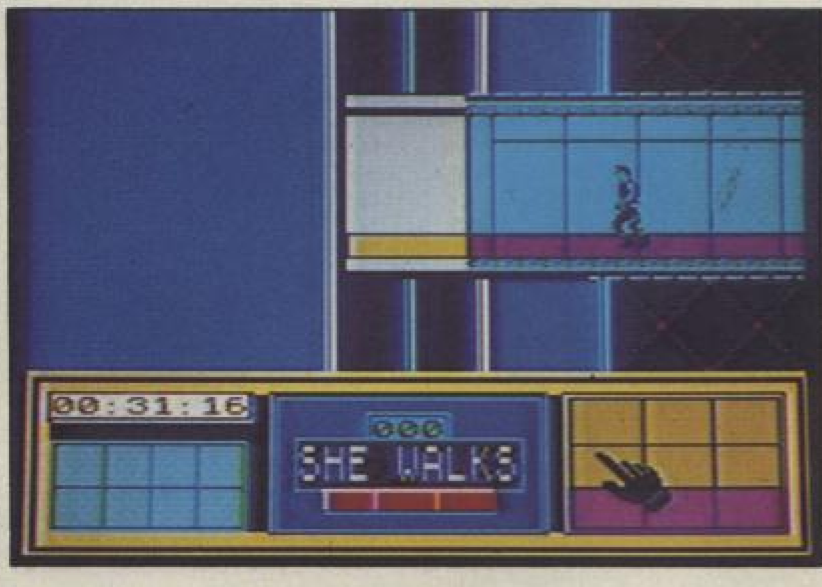
LIGHTS, CAMERAS, ACTION!

The game is split into three sections: choose your script, each with a different amount of actors and scenes; select your backdrop and cast, and then you're all ready for shooting the film. Shooting takes place with arcade-style action – collide with policeman (that'll make 'em laugh) and avoid the drunks, for they'll cost you time – and time IS money. Once shot you can edit your movie and then just sit back and watch your production – but more importantly, will it go down well at the box office . . .

Then, from **GO!** comes the fantasy role playing game, ***Wizard Warz*** – taken from an original idea by Canvas Software. Throw an assortment of spells across the play area before your viewing screen diminishes through lack of health. ***Street Fighter*** is also ready for release from GO!,

such a backlog of releases to cope with!

The **Epyx** team should have evil although you won't be able to get hold of it for a while – they've got



► **Evil Elvin is up to his old tricks again . . .**

Elvin's ***Impossible Mission II*** ready in the next couple of months. The basic layout is very similar to *Impossible Mission* (76%, Issue 22) although the content and storyline is larger and more challenging. Battle your way past a series of robots – sentrybots, minebots and pestbots to name a few – and collate the three digit pass code for a series of eight towers. Once all eight have been conquered you come face to face with Elvin in his control room. To defeat the megalomaniac you must deactivate the missile launch control and save the world (for the umpteenth time).

The flow of American-originated software continues with ***Street Sports Basketball***, due for release in July. More news on that very soon.

007 III

Charlie Chaplin isn't the only person to make the transition to computer next month. Her Majesty's Secret Servant James Bond returns in his third computer game soon. The suave and sophisticated super spy battles against Kananga in Brocolli's ***Live And Let Die***. As in the 1973 film (Roger Moore's first Bond) the plot revolves around the fast action of speedboats and the dangerous life of drug smuggling. As 007 you speed across the swamps and rivers of Central America. Bond's worries do not stop with his deadly pu rsuers: he must also avoid scarecrows armed with poison darts and rising corpses who throw spears and shoot at him. You're not, however, totally impervious to these vicious assaults so **Domark** (or rather 'Q') has equipped you with rocket launchers, shells and machine guns. You start as a 007 but constant los of lives could lead you to become a pathetic 000.

If you take a look at this month's budget Smash from Firebird, *Brainstorm*, you'll see it's written by Pete Cooke (programmer of *Tau Ceti*, *Academy* and *Micronaut*

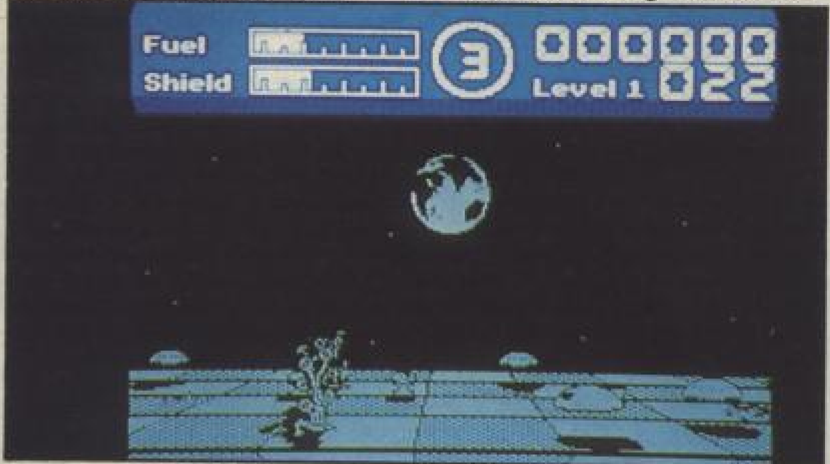
One). His latest game, this time at £7.95, is available from Firebird in June under the title ***Earthlight***. It's described as a 'Full perspective scrolling shoot 'em up', and set on the moon. Slaatn, an ordinary everyday alien from the planet Acturian, is pulled off-course from his patrolling squadron one day and forced to land on a cold and crater-filled moon – lost and a long way from home. There's only one way to get off the planet: he must find and neutralise the moon's transmitters allowing him to escape from the planet's mysterious pull. Unfortunately for Slaatn, the transmitters are guarded by droids and monsters whose sole aim in life is to keep the transmitters functioning.

The graphics, like the scenario, are said to be 'Out of this world' – really?

KNIGHT TIME

The producers of this month's puzzling Smash game *Sophistry* have signed up R T Smith (programmer of *Arnhem*, *Desert Rats* and *Vulcan* – all successful wargames) for their next arcade release. ***Cyberknights***, from **CRL**, features one or two players and contains two different programs. You must fight other gladiators, like yourself, to a gruesome and fatal conclusion. Survival is the only key to the future, which contains great financial reward – and money is the only way you'll increase the fighting power of your Cyberknight, or gain extra Cyberknights if you wish. Then, using the combat program, you can pit your warrior against any other player's design, or even a computer-generated warrior, and two preset designs are included for immediate action.

Cyberknights is available now, on cassette (£7.95) or disk (£14.95).



► Pete Cooke's latest Firebird game comes out of the shadows soon . . .

Those two-foot green people at **Gremlin Graphics** have ***Skate City*** waiting in the boxes for release on the streetwise kids in the next few months. It's based around the exhilarating sport of roller skating. Your main objective is to gain as much street cred as possible – shown on your cred-o-meter. Help Freddie, the man with the wonder wheels, to avoid obstacles and carry out as many spins, flip and amazing stunts as possible, to finally become the most streetwise kid in the city.

Mickey Mouse, ***Alternative World Games*** and ***Hercules*** should all be out in a month's time. We've also seen ***Venom Strikes Back*** which has astounding presentation, but seems to be very similar to the *Yesod* games – a full review next month. All four are from Gremlin Graphics. They've also got ***Night Raider*** – a flight simulator – but that'll be out at the end of '88.

Soldier Of Light from **ACE** (another Softek label), although behind the proposed Easter schedule, should be with you now. The coin-op conversion of Taito's 1987 Top 5 hit surpasses all other other arcade conversions (ACE's words, not ours), but certainly looks to be one of the most eagerly awaited arcade tie-ins for months. You take the part of Xain, an intergalactic warrior who must prevent the destruction of all the planets in the galaxy by the evil Empire's invaders. That'll be about the fiftieth time you'll save the universe this year!

More coin-op conversions from ACE include ***Alien Syndrome*** and ***Darius***. Both from arcade producers, Taito.

ROLLING STONES

Scheduled for the beginning of May is ***The Flintstones*** from **GrandSlam**. Fred, Barney, Wilma and all the gang are back to their old tricks again – Quicksilva first released a Bedrock game, called *Yabba Dabba Doo* (81%, Issue 26), in 1986.

Fred and Barney are trying to have a quiet bowling game down at the Bedrock Super-Bowl, but Wilma has different ideas. Fred has promised to paint the living room before his Mother-in-Law arrives, so Barney will have to wait until tomorrow. You must help complete the painting, while avoiding obstacles and hinderances such as their adventurous child Pebbles. Once completed, Fred can trip down to the bowling alley for a few frames with Barney 'Butter Fingers' Rubble. On their return, however, Pebbles is nowhere to be seen. After comforting the distressed Wilma they find Pebbles perched on a high girder in a building site; now you must help fearless Fred rescue her. All in a day's work for the stoneage TV family.

ZEPPELIN LANDS

YOU MAY REMEMBER us mentioning at Christmas time that Derek Brewster (ex-CRASH Adventure Trail writer) was starting up his own software house. Well their first Spectrum budget releases are on the software shelves now. **Zeppelin Games** is the name, and for more info on them take a look at the NEWS page.

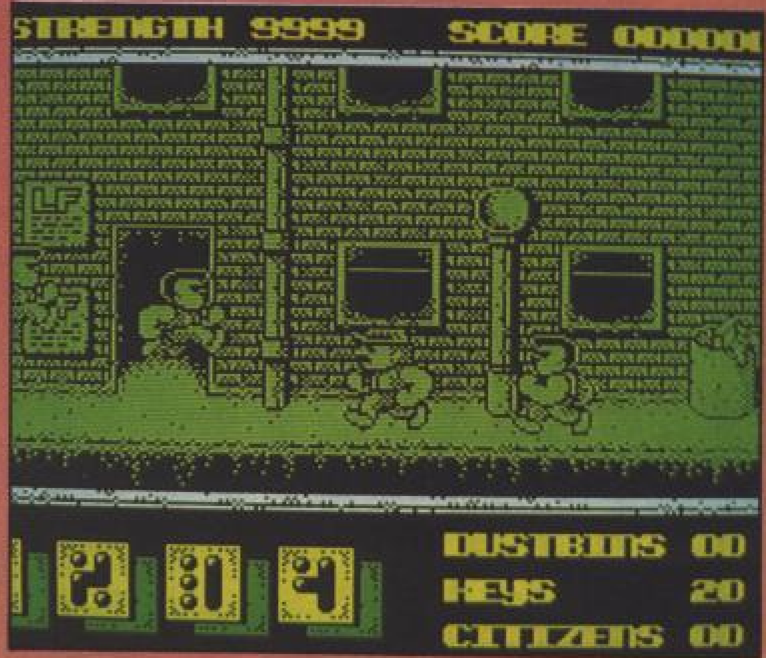
Their first release is ***Frontline*** – very similar to Ocean's *Rambo*, although not as impressive. Zeppelin's second game is ***Sabotage*** – a basic but polished shoot 'em up.

Players have always been a very quiet but extremely successful company on the Spectrum computer. Their next release is based on the oriental sport of karate. ***Shanghai Karate*** features animated backdrops, drawn by Jabba Severn (*Denizen*, *Riding The Rapids*), and digitised sound effects by Andy Severn. Colin Swinbourne (*Joe Blade*) helps out with the sprites.

Colin Swinbourne is terribly busy at the moment finishing ***Joe Blade II*** – follow up to the superb *Joe Blade* (84%, Issue 44). Set in the London of 1995, the streets are full of punks, muggers and other degenerates. There's only one man who can clean up scum city, and that's old JB. It promises to surpass its predecessor.

While Players are one of the quiet budget houses of the software world, **Code Masters** are certainly not. The people who re-invented the word 'hype' will be back on our TV screens on Saturday May 7 promoting their Sport Aid game, ***The Race Against Time***. The game takes the player across the six continents, from landmark to landmark, solving intriguing puzzles along the way. They're confident it'll sell over a million – the most successful game of the year so far, *Out Run*, only sold 300,000! Keep trying lads . . .

The recently relaunched **Power House** have a new character on their hands. Moonboots is the latest budget star, in ***Metropolis*** – an arcade adventure taking the player around a large town trying to gain fuel for his escape. To help Moonboots on his way are three different forms into which he can change; Zoid the Droid; Superspy or The Mad Monk. *Metropolis* is out at the beginning of May.



► The eponymous jail bird returns

APOLOGIES: Last month we stated that ***Dusty Droid And The Garbage Gobblers***, ***OK Yah!!*** and ***Don't Say It, Spray It*** were all from **Top Ten Hits**. This was – and still is – absolutely incorrect. These budget games are in fact the product of **Pirate Software**. Apologies to all involved; the person responsible has been shot.



ULTIMATE
PLAY THE GAME
PRESENT
JETMAN
OUR HERO, HIDING FROM THE LONE SAMURI ALIEN, THE PLURP ASSASSIN, AND FLASH GORDON, HAS JUST WITNESSED A VISION PRESENTED BY THE FABULOUS EYE OF OKTUP THAT CAN SEE INTO THE FUTURE! NOW HE WISHING HE HADN'T SEEN IT! MEANWO... THE SHIP IS HURTLING TOWARDS IT'S DESTINATION....
R.I.P. JETMAN LOONY
WOW!
AIEEE! THE 'EYE' IS NEVER WRONG! I YAM GOIN' DIE! I YAM GOIN' TO END! I YAM NEVER GOIN' SEE MY MAMMY AGAIN! I YAM GONNA BE WORM MEAT F'REVER, AN' NEVER EAT PUDDIN' AGAIN ..(WAIL)
LOOVID
BUT WAIT...HOL' UP THAR...! THAT VISION SHOWED MY GRAVE... IN SOIL...WITH A HEADSTONE AN' FRESH FLOWERS! SO IT MUST BE ON A PLANET AN' I'M ON A SPACESHIP OUT IN SPACE... HAH!!
HOPE
LOOVID
SO ALL I GOTTA DO....
...IS MAKE SURE THAT THIS SHIP NEVER LANDS ON A PLANET... NOT EVER... NEVER ...NOT EVEN ONCE...
GETTINS V. CLOSE NOW...
SHLOOP
NEVER, NEVER, NEVER.
IF I HAD FINGERS I'D CROSS THEM...
PLITCH
PLITCH
PLOTCH
MEBBE JUS' ONCE MORE
BWAH
KRUMP!
ACK!
A BIT LATER... WHEN THE DUST'S CLEARED, THE LOCAL ALIENS GATHER FOR A LOOKSEE...
PEEPO
DED
TOOT
TWEET
...AND DECIDE TO TAKE OUR HERO BACK TO THEIR HIVE!
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
TOOT
TWEEP
WHERE OUR HERO IS RE-UNITED WITH THE REST OF THE WRECKED SHIPS CREW
BOY! AM I WRECKED!
BLEAT!
HUP!
HUP!
HEY, LOOKIT! THEY'VE BRUNG US THE LOONY THAT GOT US INTO THIS MESS!
SNARL!
YANGH!
RAUK!
TOOT
WHA...? WHAT?...EH? WHERE'M I YAT? I DONT LIKE THIS PLACE! IT SMELLS IN THIS PLACE! I WANNA GO HOME! I DON' WANNA STOP HERE! NO WAY! WOW! I'M ALL TIED UP!..OH! WHASSAPPNIN'?? BWEEE!
QUIET, LOON! WE'RE ALL CAPTIVES OF THE QUOTS! THEY'RE SAVING US FOR THE ARENA!
YEAH! WE GOIN' HAFTA FIGHT THEIR CHAMPION... TO THE DEATH!!
WHAT..? FIGHT ONE OF THESE SQUISHY LITTLE GUYS?... NO PROBBO! I'LL HAVE 'EM FOR BREKKERS!
THEY DON'T SEEM TO THINK SO...!
BIFFO
R.I.P JETMAN
DIGGY DIG
WOO! NEX' MOON, EH?



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NOW TRAPPED WITHIN THIS RAVENOUS MONSTER FIGHT ITS ANTIBODIES TO GAIN ACCESS TO THE MAIN FUNCTIONS IN ORDER TO SHUT THEM DOWN – AND THAT'S NOT EASY! THEN BUILD A SPECIAL WEAPON, BREACH THE DEFENSIVE DOORS . . . JUST FOR STARTERS!
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